

TIME

The Blair Witch Project

INTERNET STOCKS
WHAT ARE THEY REALLY WORTH?
PICO IYER ON CAMBODIA



The rags-to-witches story—*almost too scary to tell!*—of how two guys turned a creepy, \$35,000 “documentary” into the sleeper movie hit of the summer

Directors
Daniel Myrick and
Eduardo Sanchez





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The Dole: Debating ways to deal with the "hard-to-serve" (see NATION)



Rhymes with Rich: Myrick and Sanchez's *Project* has all Hollywood buzzing (see THE ARTS)



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COVER: Photograph for TIME by Ted Thai

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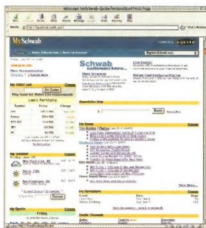
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Timothy Roche/Gulf Shores

Is This the Meanest Kid in All of Alabama?

His mom says he needs treatment, but a judge bars him from all public schools

IN KINDERGARTEN, LANCE Landers lunged at his teacher with a sharp pencil. In sixth grade, he drew pictures of himself clobbering kids with a baseball bat. By the time he reached middle school in the resort town of Gulf Shores, Ala., he would spit into trays of food in the cafeteria, hurl batteries at other students and disrupt classes by jabbering nonsensical words he claimed were Spanish. Most mornings he greeted the principal with "Hello, motherf---!" Lance taunted bus drivers by saying he paid no price for misbehaving.

Until recently, he was right. A 15-year-old ninth-grader, Lance had been declared "emotionally conflicted," and was shielded from expulsion by federal laws that protect children with disabilities. But last April he went too far. On a school bus full of children, he punched a teacher's aide and threatened to grab the steering wheel and cause a wreck. District Attorney David Whetstone sued the boy in civil court, describing him as a "clear and present danger," and persuaded a state judge to bar him from all Alabama public schools. "It was a little creative," says

Landers at age 10 met a creepy pal at a school zoo day

Whetstone, "but we were out of resources."

The boy's mother, Anne Vinson, appealed the judge's order last week and is now suing the school district, accusing it of violating the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Vinson says her son suffers from extreme attention-deficit disorder and needs treatment, not banishment. "He wants to be like everyone else, but he can't help himself."

Most of the time, Lance doesn't seem very menacing. He mows lawns for spending money and collects Matchbox cars. But when somebody challenges him, says his mother, "he can get very ugly and mean." Where does that come from? Vinson doesn't know. She has a degree in early-childhood development, and she has six other children (three by her first husband, one other by Lance's father, whom she divorced shortly after Lance was born, and two by her current husband), none of whom have been in trouble.

Vinson has taken Lance to psychologists and neurologists, who have tried half a dozen drugs, including Ritalin. Nothing has worked. "His mouth," she says, "goes 10 times faster than his brain." Counselors say Lance's violent tantrums are learned behavior. He knows that acting out wins him attention.

His teachers say they can't help anymore. In elementary school, they told the judge,



Landers, attending a wilderness boot camp, took a break last week for a visit from his mother, left

they referred Lance to a psychiatrist, and he was later sent to an alternative school. But he was sent back because he wouldn't take his medication. His mother home-schooled him for a semester, after which he returned for eighth grade. The school hired aides to sit beside him in class and on the bus, but Lance mocked and assaulted them.

The day after the Columbine High School shootings in Littleton, Colo., last April, Lance brought a newspaper to school, showed an aide the story and asked, "Did you see this?" He said nothing else, just stared in a way the aide found threatening. More chilling, say school officials, are Lance's drawings of cities that he says he wants to destroy. Hank Vest, the Gulf Shores Middle School principal, says, "He made the statement that I did not know what all he was capable of doing."

Lance's lawyer, James Sears, says the teen is "stuck in the politics of Columbine." Dis-

trict Attorney Whetstone, who knows the boy's family from church, showed no interest in him until after the Colorado school shootings. Now, he says, he hopes to use Lance's case to make a larger point. Whetstone says all the advice on preventing another Littleton "gives us a list of things to watch for, but everything on it describes emotionally conflicted kids" like Lance, and they are shielded from expulsion by federal law. "I may not know what the answer is, but I know what the answer is not. You don't let them stay in school."

When Alabama schools reopen this week, Lance will be at a treatment center and wilderness camp near Birmingham. A juvenile judge sent him there for assaulting the school-bus aide. His mother and lawyer don't think it's the best place for him to get help, but until his court appeal, he has no place else to go. "He's not some two-headed monster with a tail," says Sears. "He's just a kid with a disability." ■

“He can get very ugly... He can't help himself.” —LANCE'S MOTHER

LETTERS



John F. Kennedy Jr., 1960-1999

“He was a child who belonged to all of us since that terrible day in November. My heart is broken, and this time it can’t be repaired.”

NICOLE SCHIMMENTI
Strongsville, Ohio

THE MAGNITUDE OF THE GRIEF EXPERIENCED by the people of this country with respect to the tragic loss of John, Carolyn and Lauren is extraordinary [JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY JR., 1960-1999, July 26]. May both the Kennedy and Bessette families eventually find some comfort in the amount of love that surrounds them.

JOANNE MILLIS
Medford, N.Y.

THE MESSAGE OF THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF these three talented young people is that all we have is now. In our time of sadness, we have a compelling message to move us to live and love better.

JAMES R. FISHER JR.
Temple Terrace, Fla.

J.F.K. JR. AND DIANA EMERGED SUCCESSFULLY as shining examples most of us would hope to try to emulate. They were our bridge to the future, images of what the world would be like if we could all just be more like them. Who will now provide our daily reinforcement of class and compassion?

NANCY RUTLEY BAYLEY
Olympia, Wash.

HE WAS NOT OUR PRINCE. HE WAS OUR brother. He showed that Americans can have nobility.

GREGORY S. ROGERS
Twin Falls, Idaho

YOUR COVERAGE OF THE LATEST KENNEDY tragedy was very thorough. Although we never met J.F.K. Jr., he seemed to be a part of our society.

MYLA FIGUEROA
Manila

THAT DARK SHADOW HANGING OVER the Kennedys is not a curse, just the odds. An extremely large family with money, resources, connections, time, opportunities—and a medium of foolhardiness—beyond what most can afford, including taking risks and indulging in pursuits

others might not even consider, is likely to face such horrors. The only curse is Damn! What's next?

PATTI GARRITY
Manhattan Beach, Calif.

LIFE IS IRRETRIEVABLY PRECIOUS. We should grieve as much for the Bessettes as for the Kennedys.

VLADIMIR HACHINSKI
London, Ont.

IT IS NOT THE NUMBER OF YEARS we spend on this earth that counts. It's what we do while we are here that really matters. Though they died young, their lives were complete.

BARBARA MURTAGH
Dublin

I AM SORRY FOR THE DEATHS OF THREE young people and for their families, who grieve for them. But I am appalled at the extravagant outpouring of adulation.

MERLIN ANDREW
Toronto

THE LOSS OF ONE FAMILY MEMBER is hard enough to accept; to have to deal with the simultaneous deaths of three is beyond comprehension. Like so many other South Africans, I felt the Kennedy

OUTPOURINGS OF GRIEF

When J.F.K. Jr. was lost in a plane crash along with wife Carolyn and sister-in-law Lauren Bessette, the response from our readers was on a scale similar to that occasioned by the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

■ Immediately after the fatal car crash in Paris, 1,456 readers wrote to grieve over Diana [SPECIAL REPORT, Sept. 8, 1997].

■ In the first week after the death of J.F.K. Jr., the count was 1,242 [COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE, July 26].

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family was a part of my childhood, my teenage years and now my adult life. I have the greatest admiration for their strength of character, their determination, and above all, their kindness to those less fortunate. John Jr. typified the clan. The Kennedys can all lift their heads in pride and say, "Here was a man."

VICKY SCHOEMAN
Cradock, South Africa

I AM TIRED OF READING ABOUT THE Kennedy-family curse. The curse that afflicts so many of the "unlucky" Kennedys is their attitude that the rules that apply to the rest of us simply do not apply to them.

John Kennedy Jr., as pilot in command of a small but powerful single-engine plane, should never have taken off in coming haze and darkness without an instrument rating. The tragedy that took the lives of his passengers and blighted those of their families could have and should have been avoided.

ANNE DUTHOIT
Paris

THANK YOU, *TIME*, FOR SUCH A BALANCED feature on someone who was an ordinary person living an extraordinary life. He was close to my age, and in his life I saw

my own—at times good, at times bad, always uncertain. In his death, I saw my own frailty. I felt as though he belonged to all of us. I understand the loss that

THE KENNEDY APPEAL

As the nation mourns the passing of yet another bright young Kennedy star, this time with wife and sister-in-law, one ponders again the enormous appeal of the Kennedy family to the common citizen.

Perhaps a good part of that appeal lies in ways in which the Kennedys have always projected family unity: in times of triumph and in times of grief, naturally, but also in times of appalling scandal—sometimes tragic, often embarrassing—when the ability to show understanding, compassion and forgiveness transcends indulgence in posing as victim. It is a principle that gives substance to the glamour. The loyalty the Kennedys bestow on one another is a loyalty that outlasts royalty the world over.

MARIANNE H. KNOWLTON
Portsmouth, N.H.

Americans, along with a great number of others, must feel. Today we are all a family mourning the loss of our little boy.

ROB ELFORD
London, Ont.

The Tragedy and the Press

ONCE AGAIN THE MEDIA, PARTICULARLY television, have churned up a politically correct, Diana-like atmosphere of nostalgic national pseudo mourning.

LEONARD HILL
Darmstadt, Germany

AS THE LONGTIME PUBLISHER OF A MAJOR magazine, I was amazed at *TIME*'s accomplishment in putting out the issue on the J.F.K. Jr. tragedy. Few readers can comprehend the complexity of virtually full-issue editorial coverage within such a short time frame. Congratulations!

BILL LANE
Menlo Park, Calif.

I AM APPALLED THAT YOU WOULD PUBLISH a magazine in memory of John F. Kennedy Jr. before his body was found. At a time like this, a little compassion goes a long way.

KITTY CLEMENTS
Boston

The shoe is on the other foot.

A POLITICAL CARTOONIST SHOWED CABLE-TV reporters underwater in scuba gear, microphones extended to interview the fish off Martha's Vineyard. Yes, the J.F.K. Jr. crash was a tragedy, but the print and media coverage was excessive.

PHIL COHEN
Bay Harbor, Fla.

WATCHING TV INTERVIEWS AT J.F.K.'S grave site in Arlington National Cemetery and outside John's apartment in New York City, I was struck by the derisive note of the commentary: "Who are they to grieve? They didn't know him." Yes, we should weep, and we should grieve, for our country has lost its finest son; it is our turn to salute.

JEAN MAXWELL
Atlanta

A President's Salary

YOUR ITEM LISTING THE SALARIES OF VARIOUS heads of state [NOTEBOOK, June 7] said the President of Costa Rica earns \$250,000 a year. That figure is completely off the mark. The yearly salary of Costa Rica's President amounts to \$98,036—including an allowance for expenses. The President does not live in a house paid for by the government but

in his private residence. In addition, all household expenditures are paid from his personal income.

JAIME DAREMBLUM, AMBASSADOR
Embassy of Costa Rica
Washington

Wide on Wide

MANY READERS MISSED THE POINT IN discussing *Eyes Wide Shut* [LETTERS, July 26]. The concern is not the beautiful naked people embracing but the fact that they are doing so in public as entertainment. Civilized people make passionate love, but they do it in a bedroom, not in front of a movie camera. Let's not go any further into peep show-ism.

JOHN KENRICK ELLIS
Sierra Madre, Calif.

IT WAS INTERESTING TO NOTE HOW MANY readers expected negative comments about the Cruise-Kidman cover because the couple appeared to be nude. But not even graphic copulation could save this clunker. Stanley Kubrick spent 53 months on this project, which he had wanted to produce for 28 years. I hope his demise was not triggered by seeing the end result.

ARLINE MCFARLANE
West Vancouver, B.C.

Words of Courage

LANCIE MORROW'S EXCELLENT REPORT [CINEMA, July 19] on the recently released documentary film *Return with Honor* gives well-deserved recognition to the heroism of the American POWs who endured years of unspeakable torture at the hands of the North Vietnamese. In his televised interview, my father Commander Jeremiah Denton stunned and infuriated his captors by defying them directly with words that pledged his support to the American government "as long as I live."

He was tortured before the interview as a warning, and afterward as a punishment, until he nearly lost his mind. His blinking the word torture was not meant to explain why he had given a prepared propaganda statement, as he had not. Rather, it was to cover the possibility that the communists would dub in words to replace his own defiant words and explain why he had agreed to be interviewed. My father received the highest Navy award, the Navy Cross, for his heroic words of defiance, not for his clever blinking.

JAMES S. DENTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Freedom House
Washington

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IN SEARCH OF VOYAGER: This bewildered band of travelers somehow mistook a golf course in Winter Haven, Florida, for the nine-hole golf course on Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas*. The group hustled off the course when a knowledgeable caddy informed them that they could find out more about the revolutionary cruise ship at www.rccl-voyager.com or by calling 1-800-521-8611.

Take Your Pick

ACCORDING TO A TIME/CNN POLL [NATION, July 26], 85% of Americans would like the government to mandate the right of patients to select their doctor. Will Congress give parents the right to choose their child's teacher?

ALAN BONSTEEL, M.D.
San Francisco

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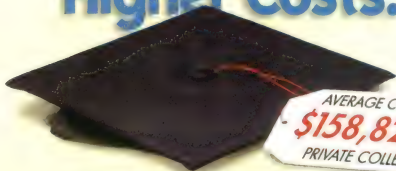


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VERBATIM

“Yasser Arafat ... is like a stripper. But ... the stripper, with all the clothes she takes off, gets more and more beautiful. Yasser Arafat, with every concession that he makes ... gets more ugly.”

MUSTAFA TLASS,
Syrian Defense Minister, on negotiations with Israel

“No, we don’t retrain soldiers not to kill, no way.”

LIEUT. COL. MICHAEL D. CLAY,
on how soldiers are prepared for peacekeeping missions

“Joining the 3,000th-hit club as a member of one team and one team only, that has a nice ring to it.”

TONY GWYNN,
of the Padres, the 22nd player to reach the 3,000 mark

“I learned interesting things from James Caan, like how to blow my nose without a handkerchief ... You almost never see Emma Thompson do it.”

HUGH GRANT,
actor, on what he learned while making his new film



READY TO RASSLE World Wrestling Federation heavy Vince McMahon and family hope to pin down \$172.5 million by selling WWF stock to the public. They may be able to create a whole new meaning for the term buy and hold

WINNERS & LOSERS



HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
Her Bill's-a-mess Talkathon gets pundits howling, but New Yorkers like it. Her polls jump 10 points

RICHARD HOLBROOKE
Emerges from Senate rough-up to be U.N. envoy. Such power—and so close to Charlie Rose

MARK MCGWIRE
Nixes risky, strength-building Andro; gets 501st homer. Fix ump snafu, and you're God

STEVE CASE
You've got losses! AOL CEO watches stock tumble. But he's still a cybermogul, and you're not

DAVID SIMMONS
Utah bizman cops a plea in Olympics scandal. Do they have ice dancing at Leavenworth?

CHUCK D.
Public Enemy rolls out anti-Semitic CD. Not only racist, but so 15 minutes ago



LAWSUITS

Being the U.S. Means Hardly Ever Saying Sorry

SAUDI MULTIMILLIONAIRE SALAH IDRIS IS preparing to sue the U.S. government in an effort to win back his good name—plus the \$30 million or so he lost when the U.S. bombed his pharmaceutical factory last year. According to U.S. officials, Idris' plant in Khartoum stored chemical-weapons material and had links to **OSAMA BIN LADEN**, the alleged mastermind of attacks on two American embassies in Africa one year ago. But while America has provided little evidence to implicate Idris, the Saudi businessman has commissioned a U.S. investigative firm to support his claim that his plant produced nothing but medicine. Aided by the D.C. law firm Alkin, Gump (where President Clinton's friend **VERNON JORDAN** is a partner), Idris won the release of \$25 million that Washington seized last August. If Idris sues, he'll face a formidable



Hard hit: The bombed factory in Khartoum.

obstacle: a senior Administration official says the government will argue that its attack is covered by a doctrine of international law known as sovereign immunity and cannot be challenged in court. Disagreement persists in the government, he concedes, as to whether Idris knew chemical-weapon feedstocks were in his factory, but it has no doubt they were. Faced with the same decision, he insists, the U.S. would attack again.

—By Sally B. Donnelly and Adam Zagorin/Washington

CAMPAIGN 2000

You're on Your Own, Dad

GEORGE W. BUSH LIKES TO JOKE THAT when one of his daughters saw how well he was doing in the polls, she told him, "Dad, you're not as cool as they think you are." That's about all we're likely to hear this campaign from either of his 17-year-old twins **BARBARA** and **JENNA**. As granddaughters of a President, they are already monitored by the Secret Service, which has asked the campaign to skimp on the details of how the pair spent the

summer. That's fine with the potential First Twins. "They're not big into campaigning," says spokeswoman **MINDI TUCKER**. While **STEVE FORBES** has enlisted his four daughters, Bush, who worked for his father's campaigns, is following the Clinton model used to shield



Jenna and Barbara Bush

Chelsea. It's one area in which he would like to emulate the man he wants to succeed.

—By John F. Dickerson/Washington

RACKETEERING

Tattletale Probe Widens To Tabloids and Banks

UNTIL A COLORADO GRAND JURY INDICTED them for racketeering, **JAMES** and **REGANA RAPP** ran a \$1.5 million-a-year business dredging up and selling confidential data on celebrities. **BRUCE WILLIS**, **CALISTA FLOCKHART**, **JOHN** and **PATSY RAMSEY** and even the Columbine victims were marks for the couple's Touch Tone Information Acquisition, based in suburban Denver. The Rapps, according to authorities, assumed a variety of false identities to filch bank, phone, credit-card and stock-transaction records. Now investigators are seeking to zero in on the end users of the information, who are believed to be news media, prominent among them the *Globe* and the *National Enquirer*, as well as banks, insurance companies and collection agencies.



The Rapps

"The Rapps were passing on tons of stuff on any big names in the news," says **ROBERT BROWN**, an agent for the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. "The big question is, Did those who wanted the information know how Touch Tone was getting it?" Deputy District Attorney **DENNIS HALL** of Jefferson County has little doubt: "It's like buying stolen property and getting it on the cheap. It's hard to believe that they didn't know it was obtained illegally." —By Richard Woodbury/Denver

THE DRAWING BOARD

HILLARY CLINTON'S RECENT INTERVIEW HAS OPENED THE DOOR FOR OTHER SPOUSES TO EXPLAIN THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THEIR OFFICE-SEEKING MATES...

TIPPER GORE ON AL'S LACK OF ANIMATION...
IT'S DUE TO HIS NAUGHTINESS AS A CHILD WHICH LED TO MANY VISITS TO THE WOODSHED—WHERE HE FORGED A BOND!
WOOD IS GOOD

MARILYN QUAYLE ON DAN'S INABILITY TO THINK ON HIS FEET...
AT A YOUNG AGE, DAN WAS CAUGHT IN AN EMOTIONAL TUG OF WAR!
DAN'S NOTICE

SHELLEY BUCHANAN ON PAT'S ANTI-PATHY TOWARD FOREIGNERS
AS A CHILD, PAT WAS BITTEN BY THE TACO BELL CHIHUAHUA!
YO QUIERO NAFTA!



If you're naked, hungry and like to dance, Ames, Iowa, is the place to be this Saturday, especially for Republicans. C.O.P. presidential candidates want your support in the quadrennial straw poll—a voting exercise with the precision and meaning of a Ouija board that has taken on lever-of-death significance for some candidates. To entice lever pullers, campaigns have bought scores of tickets (\$25 a head), hauled supporters across the state on fleets of free air-conditioned buses, and bedecked the faithful with hats, shirts and stickers. The afternoon promises to be a toe-tapping jamboree as attendees gorge themselves on pulled pork and sweet corn, all the while listening to gospel and country music. George W. Bush is bringing in the sports heavies, including skeet-shooting champion Kim Rhodes and bass fisherman Johnny Morris, while Pat Buchanan's giving out potholders. And Lamar Alexander, who has 200 bicyclists coming to town, revived the plaid-shirt motif on his invitation to meet Miss Iowa.

REALITY CHECK



NEXT STOP, EUPHORIA Amtrak has a new employee handbook, part of its effort to overhaul service. Expect:

- **Hygiene:** "Body odor can result in the loss of otherwise happy customers"
- **Empathy:** "[Use this phrase] 'I understand why you'd be ...'"
- **Narrative:** "Tell guests about the route, scenery and points of interest"
- **Mating:** "Waiters: Introduce strangers seated together ... 'break the ice'"
- **Haute cuisine:** "[Chefs should] live up to the high expectations guests hold for onboard dining"

FIDELITY



HAVE SU LAWYER CALL MI LAWYER
Just as American-Cuban relations are thawing—last week more direct flights to Havana were okayed—litigation heats up

Cuban American vs. Cuba: Ana Margarita Martinez filed a sexual-violation suit against Cuba, saying she was deceived into marrying a Cuban spy who vanished **Cuba vs. America:** Fidel Castro filed a \$181 billion suit charging the U.S. with "bloody acts" against Cuba, including CIA attempts to poison his milk shakes **Cuba vs. America:** Last April, Cuba tried to block Bacardi rum from using its trademarked Havana Club logo. It lost **America vs. Cuba:** Families of those shot down by Castro's air force in 1996 were awarded \$188 million in damages

Sen-a-tor! Sen-a-tor! Sen-a-tor!

IT IS NOT THE POLICY OF THIS COLUMN TO ENDORSE political candidates. That's because this column doesn't usually know anything about political candidates. But about Jerry Springer, who is considering running for Senator in Ohio, we know a lot. We even scored a bootleg copy of the episode where the guy makes out with the horse.

While I may not know exactly what a Senator does, I'm pretty sure Springer would be good at it. Not only is he accustomed to acrimonious debate, but if two Senators start to mix it up on the floor, then Steve Wilkos, the off-duty cop who doubles as Springer's bodyguard, would break things up. Wilkos would have been right in between Charles Sumner and Preston Brooks in 1856, when Sumner took a wicked cane beating that left him unconscious. Jer-ry! Jer-ry! Jer-ry!

As a longtime Springer supporter, I'm upset that the media aren't taking his candidacy as seriously as Hillary Clinton's. Hillary has never run for office; Springer was a five-term city councilman and a two-term mayor of Cincinnati who wrestled a bear during his tenure. And while I don't know Hillary's opinions other than on health care and how mental abuse leads to randomness, Springer drops science at the end of every episode. There isn't an issue he hasn't examined. Forget Social Security and child care. This guy has looked into "You're Too Fat for Porn."

As mayor from 1977-81, Springer spent a night in jail to illustrate the awful conditions in the local prisons and fought to bring rock concerts to the conservative city. Which was a great

idea except for that 1979 Who concert that turned into a stampede. Jer-ry! Jer-ry! Jer-ry!

Sure, Springer embarrassed himself when he got caught going to a massage parlor because he paid in checks instead of cash. But he rebounded from that, and as a Senator, you can rest assured, he will not only have left his scandals behind him, he will also keep accurate financial records.

Basically, the big advantage to electing Springer is that if Jay Leno asks you who your Senator is, you might know. And I'd rather risk having an ineffective Senator than being embarrassed on national television.

I watch Springer's show because he treats the twisted, painful drama of people's lives with an odd respect, and because there are often strippers on. Sure, his circus is silly and entertaining, but without the laughter it would be liberal patronization. This is what makes people respond to him. He already has, for example, the pregnant-stripper constituency wrapped up. And he will continue to build on that base, according to his friend Tim Burke, the Hamilton County Democratic chairman who is pressing Springer to run. "Jerry has always had a Kennedyesque stump style," says Burke. "I think you'd see a sharp distinction from Senator Mike DeWine on things like this goofy-ass tax cut." Jer-ry! Jer-ry! Jer-ry!

So while other politicians argue about campaign-finance reform (Can you really have an election about the election?), Springer will focus on helping troubled people like those on his show. Compassionate conservatism? Practical idealism? I'm sticking with "Take Care of Yourself, and Each Other." ■



NETWATCH

GOING GOING... The Miami high school student who tried to auction his "virginty" (sic) online was shut down, but most auction websites don't get nearly so interesting. Listing an item has become so easy and inexpensive that users are beginning to hock anything. Here's a sampling of items recently put up for sale on eBay, Lycos and other auction sites. Just one bid so far.



ITEM	ASKED	DESCRIPTION
Mop	40.00	Bucket not included
McDonald's Training Video: Filet-O-Fish	5.00	... gives viewer a knowledge of the procedures involved in Filet-O-Fish production
Four Eveready Batteries	.50	They still had a little charge left in them when I tested them
Bowling Pin	9.00	Looks like it's been used only for a few games
Expired Store-Stock Laxative	3.00	This bottle of Syrup of Black Draught has expired. Will be a sought-after collector's item
Old Fly Swatter	24.00	One small tear in the middle
Heineken Beer	3.99	This cap is used and in good condition. Virginia resident pays 4.5% sales tax
Bottle Cap		
Easy Cheese	.01	One 8 oz. can... American!! Will trade

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MILESTONES



MARRIED. RORY KENNEDY, 30, filmmaker and youngest child of Robert F. Kennedy, to writer MARK BAILEY, 30; in Athens, Greece. The wedding, originally planned for July 17 in Hyannis Port, Mass., was postponed after the deaths of John F. Kennedy Jr., his wife Carolyn and her sister, Lauren Bessette.

ARRAIGNED. LAURIE HIETT, 36, wife of the U.S. Army colonel leading the antidrug war in Colombia; on charges of conspiring to ship cocaine to the U.S.; in New York City. She denies the allegations.



AILING. RAISA GORBACHEVA, 67, former First Lady of the Soviet Union; with leukemia; in Münster, Germany, where she is receiving chemotherapy.

SENTENCED. CHARLES BUTLER JR., 21, and STEVEN MULLINS, 25; to life in prison without parole, for the murder of gay computer operator Billy Jack Gaither; in Rockford, Ala.

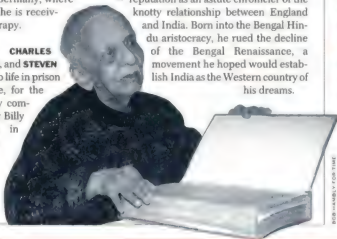
SENTENCED. ROBERT DOWNEY JR., 34, trouble-

prone actor; to three years in jail, for violating terms of his probation for a 1996 drug conviction; in Malibu, Calif.

DIED. JOE DIMAGGIO JR., 57, the reclusive and penurious only son of the baseball legend; apparently of natural causes; in Antioch, Calif. A sometime junkyard worker, he was estranged from Joe Sr. A cousin said, "He lived in the shadow of his father and could not rise above that."

DIED. WILLIE MORRIS, 64, hard-living, softhearted author; of a heart attack; in Jackson, Miss. (see EULOGY, below).

DIED. MIRAD CHAUDHURI, 101, Indian-born author critical of the New India promoted by Gandhi and Nehru; in Oxford, England. *The Autobiography of the Unknown Indian* (1951) cemented his reputation as an astute chronicler of the knotty relationship between England and India. Born into the Bengal Hindu aristocracy, he rued the decline of the Bengal Renaissance, a movement he hoped would establish India as the Western country of his dreams.



NUMBERS



\$2 billion Amount spent on advertising to children in 1998, 20 times more than in 1988

30,000 Number of TV commercials seen per year on average by an American child

63.7 Number of hours per year children ages 6 to 12 spend reading at home



36% Percentage of women older than 75 who say they "would be quite happy never having sex again"

5% Percentage of men older than 75 who say the same

\$10 million Amount former NBA star Isiah Thomas paid for control of the Continental Basketball Association

\$15 million Amount the L.A. Lakers will pay Shaquille O'Neal this season



6'5", 6'1", 6'0", 5'11" Heights of presidential contenders Bill Bradley, Al Gore, Steve Forbes and George W. Bush

2 Number of times the shorter presidential candidate has won since the TV era began in 1952

Sources: USA Today; TV Free America; Consumer Reports; Start Early; AARP; Modern Maturity; Los Angeles Times; Washington Post

EULOGY

It was early in 1968 when I met WILLIE MORRIS in New York. Morris was the editor of *Harper's* and had been a Rhodes scholar. I wrote to him shortly after I got my Rhodes, and to my surprise, he agreed to see me. He was wonderfully wry and funny—the classic Southerner. He wrote a great book about his dog. He wrote a fascinating book about the role of football in the South and the racial barriers, *The Courtship of Marcus Dupree*. You know, most Southerners thought they'd be looked down upon if they went up to the Northeast. The cultural élites would all think they were hayseeds—although that was kind of phony; the New York Times was largely run by Southerners—but there was always this sensitivity about how you'd be



seen. Willie gave us another way of thinking about the South.

You know, for most of my generation of Southerners who went north, the book that stuck in their minds was [Thomas Wolfe's] *You Can't Go Home Again*. Willie's *North Toward Home* was a beautifully written, evocative portrait of one person's love for the South who had profound regret over the racial situation. It helped a lot of people like me who wanted to see the world and do well up north but also come home and live in the South. He showed us how we could love a place and want to change it at the same time. It was really an important thing he did for me. He showed us we could go home.

—BILL CLINTON, President of the U.S.

WHO SHOULD STILL

Thanks to tough new work rules, welfare rolls have dropped almost 50% in the past six years. Now what should we do about the rest?

By ADAM COHEN

CHERLYNDRA WELLS, 21, WAS JUST the kind of welfare recipient who sets critics of welfare programs off on a rant. A single mother of four from Dallas, she left school in the ninth grade and started having children. Rather than work or marry a man who did, she relied on welfare, food stamps and Medicaid. The tough 1996 welfare-reform law spelled out in clear terms what it wanted Wells and others like her to do in the future: get a job.

Under the new rules, Wells' life changed drastically—but not the way reformers intended. She did give up welfare last year, but not to work.

Instead she lives with her mother. She takes the occasional odd job and gets help from her children's father, who kicks in support "whenever he can." Health care is tough—"I have a pile of bills this high," she says—but she found a hospital emergency room that treats her kids even when she can't pay. Wells succeeded in bucking a major national trend. She didn't join the millions of Americans who have left the welfare rolls in recent years for gainful employment.

These are euphoric times for welfare reform. The rolls have plunged nationwide—down 48% in the past six years, to a 30-year low. And two-thirds of those exiting the system have taken jobs, according to state studies. Last week's Welfare to Work conference in Chicago, which President Clinton

addressed, was a three-day lovefest between advocates for welfare recipients and labor-strapped companies seeking to hire them. Among the most surreal moments: a session on "Finding Welfare Recipients for Your Training Programs," at which social workers bellyached that in these boom times there just aren't enough welfare moms to go around.

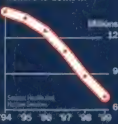
But the more welfare reform succeeds, the clearer it is that there is an entrenched group of welfare recipients who show no sign of heading anywhere near the workforce. This is true, for example, in Dallas, where despite a frothy economy and a countywide unemployment rate of just 3.6%, 17,500 of Wells' neighbors are collecting welfare benefits as if nothing had changed.

Welfare professionals have a term for these persistent welfare cases: the hard to serve. Many have backgrounds that employers shun: weak education, illiteracy, drug and alcohol abuse, mental-health problems and criminal records. Often they also have logistical obstacles, like transportation and child-care difficulties. And, some argue, many of them have the toughest barrier of all: they don't want to do work.

Today the hard to serve are the hottest topic in welfare reform—and the subject of a hard-fought ideological battle. To liberals—and the Clinton Administration—the answer is greater investment in job training, substance-abuse counseling and other programs to help them overcome their various obstacles and get

THE GOOD NEWS

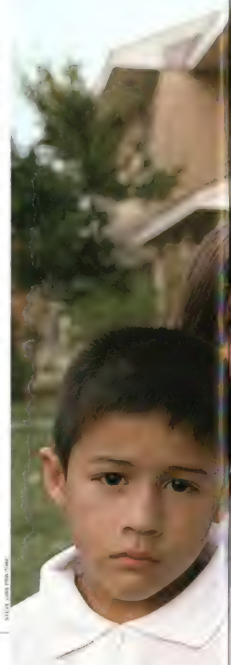
Number of people on welfare is down ...



THE BAD NEWS

... But the number of poorest Americans is on the rise

People below 50% of the poverty level in millions



I O N

L BE ON WELFARE?

■ ORTIZ FAMILY

Alicia Ortiz, a Dallas mother of four, has survived the death of her children's father and an abusive relationship. Now, can she make it off welfare?



to work. At the same time, liberals have begun calling on the Federal Government to reconsider a central tenet of the 1996 reforms: that virtually every welfare recipient can and should be in the workforce. "It flies in the face of common sense," says University of Michigan public policy professor Sheldon Danziger. "There's no evidence from any welfare program that everyone can work steadily."

But conservatives insist that three years of welfare reform have proved what they believed all along: that the best way to get welfare recipients into private-sector jobs is to subject them to strict work requirements. Also, conservatives doubt that billions of dollars in government programs are needed to prepare the hard to serve for work. "There's a great irony to that argument," says Douglas Besharov, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. "Welfare reform has already accomplished a 40%-to-50% decline in the rolls without spending money on job training."

The battle over the hard to serve is being waged now in Congress in a multi-billion-dollar fight over welfare funding.



WELLS FAMILY

Cheryl Wells, with her family, including that of her half-sister Tajuma, left welfare last year, but not for a job

The 1996 act guaranteed the states \$16.4 billion in block grants annually. But with welfare rolls plunging around the country, much of that money has gone unspent—and congressional Republicans are talking about taking back at least \$4 billion. That would be a "big mistake," Clinton declared last week in Chicago. He'd like to see the money spent on the millions of people "who could move from welfare to work if they had more training, if they had transportation, if they had child care."

And the number of people needing this kind of help may be about to shoot up, goes this argument. That's because the time limit set by the 1996 act will soon kick in. It requires that those who have received benefits for five years be cut off from welfare for the rest of their lives. The act allows states to exempt as many as 20% of cases from the five-year limit—but that may not be enough to cover a state's entire hardest-to-place population.

At the heart of the fight over hard-to-serve people is a dispute over their character. Are they, as liberals say, workers held back by lack of skills, child-care problems

THE SURPRISE BLESSINGS OF REFORM

By NANCY GIBBS
GREENVILLE

THE EXPERTS WHO BUILT the welfare system didn't intend to create a toxic culture of dependency. And it turns out the reformers offering antidotes didn't anticipate some of their own side effects either.

Certainly Lisa Van Riper didn't. Three years ago, her friend David Beasley, then the Republican Governor of South Carolina, gave the Greenville civic activist \$200,000 of private money left over from his inaugural and asked her to help make the state's new work requirements for welfare recipients stick. Van Riper's mission: to persuade every church, synagogue and private civic group in the state to adopt one welfare family and guide it toward independence.

Today her private, non-partisan foundation, Putting Families First, has become a

national model. Nearly 900 groups statewide—from fundamentalist churches to liberal organizations—have signed on to help hundreds of families. The state department of social services recruits clients, 90% of them single mothers; the church or association puts together a team to help with everything from résumés to fixing a broken toilet to lining up free dental care. No one knew how the chemistry would work—or that the public-private partnership would help yield something valuable, even beyond a 65% drop in state welfare rolls.

Greenville is the kind of place where the wild kids cruising down North Main lean out their windows and shout, "Jesus loves you!" But the church folk in town knew members didn't always practice what was preached. They might have a food bank, might donate Christmas toys and Thanksgiving baskets,

but long-term, hands-on care was left to government experts, the professional social workers. "We were like 911," says Wilhelmina Tucker, a volunteer from Foster Grove Baptist Church. "We would

"No program I've seen has done as much for race relations as this one has ... It's hard to hate a friend."

help in an emergency, but when the emergency was over, there was no follow-up."

What makes Van Riper's program special, say volunteers, is that it is personal and direct. "The government assistance shows up in the mailbox," says Jay Cox, a Presbyterian minister. "We show up at the front door." And when

they do, some are learning as much as they are teaching. Like how easy it is to lose a job because the car broke down and there is no public bus, or because a kid was sent home sick from school and the mother needed to be home too. "So now we're developing, just out of compassion and knowledge, a whole group of people that are becoming voices for day care, for medical insurance, for transportation needs," says Van Riper.

The volunteers are also watching other preconceptions crumble. As white churches work with black families and black churches adopt whites, suspicions float away. "I've been in government for 25 years," says Leon Love, deputy director of community services for the state, "and no program I've seen has done as much for race relations as this one has. We didn't go into this with that goal—but these relationships

and other facts of life beyond their control? Or are they, as conservatives insist, under-achievers at best and shirkers at worst?

The debate starts at the most basic level—there is no agreement on just how many people fall into each category. "When I started out, we talked about one-thirds," says Eli Segal, president of the Welfare to Work Partnership. "One-third would be easier to move off the rolls, one-third would be harder and one-third would be impossible." But that conventional wisdom has been abandoned now that states have begun cutting well into the bottom third of their rolls. Caseloads have dropped 69% in Mississippi in the past three years, 81% in Wisconsin and 84% in Wyoming.

One reason the boundaries are hard to define is that this roiling economy has thrown out the old rules about who can get hired. With the national unemployment rate at 4.3%—and at less than 3% in some states—business-

es are dipping deeper into the labor pool than ever before. The Welfare to Work Partnership has been placing recovering drug addicts and alcohol abusers in private-sector jobs. Even job applicants with criminal records are getting hired. UPS, for one, has "relaxed" its practice of not hiring ex-cons, says Rodney Carroll, a UPS executive who serves as chief operating officer of the Welfare to Work Partnership.

These facts bolster the conservative argument that there are few real "barriers" to employment. "There's going to be a small group who are, strictly speaking, disabled," says Lawrence Mead, professor of politics

at New York University. "But they shouldn't be on welfare at all—they should be on disability." For the rest, conservatives say, the only bar is motivation. They point to a decade-long study by Wisconsin's Project New Hope. The group made an unusual deal with 677 poor Milwaukeeans: if they worked 30 hours a week, they were guaranteed enough pay to rise above the poverty line (and affordable health-care and child-care subsidies). The results were disappointing. Only 27% stayed long enough to bring their families out of poverty, and their yearly income was no more than that of a similar group of poor people who didn't participate.

Proof that poor people lack the will to work their way out of poverty? Not necessarily, say liberals. In the real world, the hard to serve lead complicated lives. "These folks are severely limited in their ability to function day to day, much less hold full employment," says Brian Burton, executive director of the Wilkin-

develop based on people, not color. People get to know people, and then it's hard to hate a friend."

The stories are by no means always happy, and sometimes the relationship falls apart. One volunteer had to change her phone number after an unstable client turned threatening. Some mothers decide they don't want the help: they don't want to work after all. A team from a Greenville Presbyterian church was helping a young mother of two whose husband was in prison. They found her some clothes, helped her land a job, baby-sat the children. The day she finally got her driver's license, they even had a car for her, donated by a church member. She was murdered the next day in a robbery in the housing project they were trying to help her escape.

"One problem," says Curtis Johnson, pastor of Valley Brook Baptist Church, a black church of 500 members, "is that their world is unfamiliar

to us, and they know it. If I have someone who is coming out of prison and needs a job, I don't match him with some big supervisor. I match him with someone who came out of jail too and found Christ, someone he can relate to and feel comfortable with," he says. "We may have good intentions, but we can't touch them at the level of their hurt. We've never walked in their shoes. And so, without meaning to, we can seem all self-righteous and pushy."

But the rewards, when

they come, are great. Maggie Copeland, a mother of six from the 5,400-member First Baptist Church of North Spartanburg, has been working with B.J., a 15-year-old girl who lives in a nearby trailer park with her 2½-year-old daughter and her mother. B.J. used to go to another church sometimes, until the van that came to pick her up stopped coming because the drivers feared the neighborhood. After her baby was born, however, she knew what she wanted. "My mom was brought up

welfare check was cut when she dropped out of school last winter. She makes a little extra money baby-sitting other children on weekends. Last week Copeland sat in B.J.'s living room helping her choose an interview outfit for an after-school job at a dry cleaner's. Next week, when the school bus comes for her at 6:30 a.m., her mentors will make sure she is on it. "She is determined to make something of herself," says Deidre Hennechy. "I can't wait to see how far she might go."



SUPPORT Teen mom B.J. with volunteers Copeland, left, and Hennechy

son Project, a Dallas social-service agency. "They're severely addicted or have intergenerational pregnancies when they are 14 or 15. They may or may not have more than an eighth- or ninth-grade education."

Alicia Ortiz, 25, a Dallas mother of four, is leading one of those complicated lives. She used to work, but after her children's father left, she couldn't afford child care and had to quit and go on welfare. After another relationship turned abusive, she moved to a domestic-abuse shelter program. On top of it all, Ortiz says, she has "problems in my head." She has been attending some life-skills classes but has no immediate prospects of getting a job. "Some of us do have problems," she says. "We're looking for a little help."

Liberals point out that the system is not creating the right incentives. Most jobs taken by former welfare recipients, according to the National Governors' Association, pay less than \$7 an hour, not enough to bring a three-person family above poverty. Often welfare recipients who get jobs make less in salary and benefits than they received on welfare. Staying on welfare in that case is not poor motivation—it's common sense. Wendell Primus, director of income security at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, says the answer is to use tax credits for low-paid workers to tilt the balance in favor of work.

So who's right? If welfare reform has proved anything, it is that many more recipients can be made to work than anyone had thought possible. And there is evidence that some still will not accept the fact that they will eventually need to work, though that requirement has been law for more than three years. Geraldine Willoughby, a community activist in Dallas, says many of her neighbors "feel like something is going to happen," she says. "They say the government won't cut us off."

But arguing that most people can move off the rolls is not the same as saying everyone can. Fred Grandy, former Republican Congressman from Iowa, now heads Goodwill Industries, which finds jobs for those difficult to employ. Grandy believes that almost everyone can work. Goodwill helps the mentally retarded do just that. But he also believes that as reform proceeds, some welfare recipients will not be able to pull their lives together and will need to be protected by a safety net. "Tough love" has its place in welfare reform, he says, but it has its limits. "The work of reform is going to get a lot tougher," he says, "and the love is going to have to get a bit gentler." —With reporting by Hilary Hyton/Dallas

REAL POLITICS

Eric Pooley

When Sweet Talk Falls Flat

So far, Bradley's race pitch isn't winning black votes

ARGUING AGAINST WELFARE REFORM IN AUGUST 1999 IS A BIT LIKE ARGUING against the Apollo moon shot in August 1969. The Eagle has landed, and the naysayers appear to be on the wrong side of history. But at least one of them remains unmoved by the news—because nobody loves a lonely, principled fight more than Bill Bradley.

Before he left the Senate in 1996, Bradley voted against the landmark welfare bill. Today Al Gore's lone challenger for the Democratic nomination is still speaking out against that reform. Welfare is "a disastrous system," Bradley recently told TIME, "but the way to deal with it is federal commitment and state experimentation, not the Federal Government washing its hands [of the problem]." Holding that view requires courage. In a survey commissioned by the G.O.P., 60% of those polled said they were less likely to vote for Bradley after hearing his position on welfare. If there's anyplace in America where people still swoon over that kind of rhetoric, you'd think it would be the annual convention of Jesse Jackson's Rainbow/Push Coalition.

Think again. At a labor breakfast then attended by 800 Rainbow members, Bradley extolled his own commitment to racial and economic justice, then took aim at Clinton and Gore's.

"After seven years of the first two-term Democrat since Franklin Roosevelt, the number of children in poverty in America barely blipped down," he said. "One year after the Welfare Reform bill passed—which I voted against—there were 29% more children living in ... deep poverty ... Reducing [that number] should be the North Star for our society."


Bradley with some Rainbow men in Chicago

The line got a big hand. But later people were curiously unmoved; they'd been cheering the sentiment, not the sentimentalist. The response of these Democratic regulars—those who man phone banks and get out the vote—shows how hard it will be for Bradley to wrest the nomination from Gore. "Bradley didn't say anything to change my mind," said Bertrice Hall, a union administrator and enthusiastic Gore supporter (yes, they do exist). Hall and others had real problems with Bradley's pitch, including his now familiar refusal to share his plans for achieving these big ideas. "He said he's in favor of insuring 'as many Americans as possible.' What does that mean?" asks activist Pia Davis. "He wants Gore to get Clinton to sign an order banning racial profiling. Why should Gore have to do something now, when Bradley gets to wait until fall to tell us what he's going to do?"

When Bradley criticized Clinton, he also ignored a fact known to everyone in the room: with Newt Gingrich and now Tom Delay running the House, no President could launch a war on poverty. It was all Clinton could do to beat back the 1995-96 G.O.P. tide, and the Rainbow members are grateful for it—but Bradley never acknowledged that, and the omission undermined his credibility. Problem is, it's hard for Bradley to draw stark contrasts with Gore, who was cheered wildly by the Rainbow on Saturday. Bradley said he wouldn't try to reverse welfare reform but would look for ways to "improve" the bill. That's what Clinton and Gore have already done. And Bradley's argument that the welfare bill "cuts the bonds between mother and child" by requiring single mothers to work after two years did not go over well with working mothers who had to go back to their jobs after six months. "Every working mother," Bradley said after the speech, "has a choice." Hall chuckled at that one. "I didn't have a choice," she said. She will in the primary. ■



PHOTO BY AP/WIDEWORLD

A man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie, is leaning on a dark shelf. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. His hands are clasped together on the shelf. To his left, on the shelf, is a clear glass filled with white milk. The background is a solid blue color.

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opponents? Well, that's
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Have Gun? Will Travel

Criminals are afraid to arm themselves in a Virginia city that simply enforced the law

By ELAINE SHANNON RICHMOND

NOT LONG AGO, EDWARD SOLD CRACK cocaine for a living. He considered himself a businessman and made businesslike calculations of risk and reward. He was afraid rival dealers might try to rob him of his drugs or the wad of cash in his wallet. So he carried a 9-mm handgun. "Everybody had a gun," he says, "for defense." But now he has a bigger fear: if he gets caught with a weapon while committing a crime in his hometown of Richmond, Va., he faces at least five years without parole in a distant federal prison. That's why Edward, 25, doesn't pack a pistol anymore.

It's a calculation many criminals and would-be criminals are making these days in Richmond and other cities that have emulated Project Exile, the Virginia capital's innovative program to combat gun crime. It is credited with helping cut in half the number of murders in Richmond over the past two years.

Gun-control groups point to Project Exile as evidence that Congress—which last week postponed action again on modest new gun regulations—is out of step with states and cities that are moving aggressively against gun crime. But the National Rifle Association endorses Project Exile for another reason, saying it proves that vigorous enforcement of existing laws can thwart criminals without new controls on law-abiding gun owners.



RICHMOND POLICE work to trace an illegal gun seized at the home of a drug suspect

Two years ago, Richmond's homicide rate was second only to that of Gary, Ind. Gun toting had become pervasive in the city's poorer neighborhoods. Says James Comey, criminal-division chief in the local U.S. Attorney's office: "People carried guns because gun-possession crimes were not treated as anything more than a misdemeanor. What might have been a fistfight or stabbing 20 years ago was a shootout because everybody had a gun in his pocket."

In response, Comey and his boss, U.S. Attorney Helen Fahey, launched Project Exile in partnership with Richmond police chief Jerry Oliver and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The new procedure: anytime Richmond police found a gun on a drug dealer, user, convicted felon or suspect in a violent crime, the case would be tried under federal statutes that carry mandatory sentences of at least five years without parole—and

longer for repeated or aggravated offenses.

To spread the word in high-crime neighborhoods, the slogan AN ILLEGAL GUN GETS YOU 5 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON was emblazoned on billboards, flyers and city buses. The Martin Agency, an advertising firm based in Richmond, designed a slick TV campaign aimed at changing the psychology of the underworld. "It was niche marketing to the bad guys," says Oliver. "They all know the name Exile. We hit on a label that explains what it does, which is get them out of the community."

It worked. Murders

in Richmond dropped sharply, from 140 in 1997 to 94 in 1998 and 32 in the first six months of 1999. Armed robberies showed a similar decline. As of June 18, the Exile task force had won long prison sentences for 279 gun-carrying criminals. Says Fahey: "We've taken them off the streets."

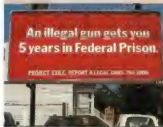
The Richmond initiative is being adopted in Atlanta; Birmingham, Ala.; Fort Worth, Texas; New Orleans; Norfolk, Va.; Philadelphia; Rochester, N.Y.; and San Francisco. President Clinton has touted Exile in a radio address. And the N.R.A., which donated more than \$100,000 to Richmond's Project Exile ad campaign, is urging Washington to spend \$50 million to apply the concept nationwide.

In Richmond today, young toughs still deal and steal because they're not afraid of a stint in the local jail. Most, however, are leaving their guns at home. When Sergeant Steve Ownby recently frisked a suspected robber, the perp shot him a don't-think-I'm-stupid look and said scornfully, "Hell, no, I don't have no gun. Project Exile'll get you five years. I'll be an old man when I get out." Ownby observed later that "I've seen a lot of programs come and go, but Exile has made a difference."

Edward, the former pistol packer, agrees: "All my friends started going away to prison [on multiple drug and gun charges]." One got 16 years, another 20. "And then I had a son. He's three. That's why I straightened up. I couldn't leave him." Edward says he drifted into crime because his dad wasn't around, and he doesn't want that to happen to his boy. Police confirm that Edward has not only laid down his arms but has also stopped dealing drugs and taken a construction job. He often works overtime late at night, and that has helped make him an Exile booster: "It's made the neighborhood a lot safer."

What They're Doing

- **FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL law-enforcement agencies work closely together in Project Exile**
- **GUN CRIMINALS, even when arrested by city police, are prosecuted under federal laws that carry mandatory five-year sentences**
- **A CREATIVE ADVERTISING agency, taking up a novel challenge, has been able to market fear to local criminals**



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Billy Rose, Theatrical Producer

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APRIL 20, 1999



AUG. 6, 1999

Taking Back the School

Even as students prepare to return, Columbine High has become a somber tourist attraction

By RICHARD WOODBURY LITTLETON

STEVE MAPLES AND HIS CHURCH YOUTH group from Springfield, Mo., traipsed across the wet lawn of Columbine High School one evening last week. They peered into windows, stroking the metal siding and running their hands along the taupe brick walls. "Seeing the school puts a realization that it really happened," said Maples. "When I looked into the cafeteria, I could see the pain that those kids must have gone through."

Maples and his two vanloads of kids were hardly alone. Since the April 20 massacre, sightseers and sympathizers have streamed to the Denver suburb of Littleton, turning Columbine into a tourist attraction. The attention will only increase this week as the school prepares to open on Monday for the fall semester. Last week the press was finally allowed to tour the interior, repaired for \$1.2 million. Says principal Frank DeAngelis: "The kids wanted a promise that they would be able to return. Now we are ready to take back the school."

Judging from tourist reaction, many may be shaken. "It never seemed real, even on TV," says Jordan Brown, 13, of Bakers-

field, Calif., prowling the building's exterior crannies with her mother. The Browns used to live in the Littleton area, and Jordan's brother Garrett, 17, who had friends at Columbine, was too upset to make the visit. "I thought the school was much bigger," says Greg Owens, 36, a Chicagoan who routed himself here after taking in Pikes Peak and Colorado sites. "But it sure touched me. For two teenagers to have done something like that—wow."

Because the school has been off limits to all but official workers, the curious have had to be content with snapping pictures at the front entrance and taking in the makeshift memorial of flowers, teddy bears and keepsakes that for a time overflowed Robert F. Clement Park, adjacent to the school. Even Columbine's 1,978 students have been kept away from the complex as an army of construction workers rushed to repair damage, install security devices and make other changes that school officials hope will be comforting for parents and students.

Those arriving on opening day will find Columbine scoured of any remnants of the shootings. Bloody carpets have been replaced by an acre of vinyl tiles, some designed by students. Bullet holes have been caulked and patched, and on the cafeteria walls, bomb stains have been scrubbed and covered over with beige paint. The skylight punctured by flying shrapnel has been replaced. The outdoor stairway around which two students died and five were injured has been rebuilt, widened and landscaped with terraces. As for the library, the scene of most of the carnage, it no longer officially exists. Workmen gutted the area and then sealed the entryway with a wall and two rows of blue lockers. For the moment, until par-

GRIM IMAGES: The chaos earlier this year, left; tourists outside the school last week

ents and school officials decide what to do, books and tables have been moved into four modular rooms alongside the school.

Among the new security measures, 16 color TV cameras have been installed to monitor activities indoors and out. Students will be issued identification badges, and access to locked entryways will be restricted to holders of electronic cards. A third uniformed guard will join a roving patrol that includes an armed Jefferson County deputy sheriff. Mental-health counselors and nurses will be on hand if needed. There will also be a designated "safe room" for those overcome by emotion. Jackson Katz, a California-

Detained and Confused

A Jonesboro shooter writes to a friend



Johnson

JUVENILE DETENTION center isn't all bad, says Mitchell Johnson, one of the two boys in jail for the Jonesboro, Ark., shootings that killed five people in March 1998. He gets to watch Jerry Springer, eat fast food, use the gym one night a week and listen to his favorite rap song, Shoot 'Em Up, by Bone Thugs-N-Harmony. Still, the realities of life in confinement are beginning to dawn on Johnson, who turns 15 this week. "I will never go to a prom. I won't have sex or kiss for seven years, almost eight," he wrote in a letter to



FRESH MEMORIALS: Visitors continue to leave flowers

All for a Scout's Honor

New Jersey rules against the Boy Scouts in the latest skirmish over gay rights. Next stop: Vermont

based authority on male violence, is being brought in to lecture coaches and activities directors about tolerance and leadership and the excesses of the jock culture that allegedly helped trigger the rampage of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold. School officials are concerned about the need to build a better climate of tolerance among all students.

Still, the mother of a victim, angry that security proposals are too lax, stormed out of a planning meeting. No one is certain how many students may not show up for school opening. Also unknown is the eventual fate of Harris' locker, No. 624, and Klebold's, No. 837. For the time being, they will remain locked and unused.

"The building is cold. No voices get in or get out. You can't hear anything," says tourist Joseph Lyman, gazing up at Columbine's brick facade and sealed windows. Lyman, a teacher from Viroqua, Wis., came by last week after attending an education conference in Boulder. He adds, "The town is so clean-cut and sterile. Did anyone ever wonder about the dark side? There are so many things you have to be out of touch with before something like this can happen." Lyman asks, "When do you notice? When it gets to your town?"

—With reporting by

Maureen Harrington/Littleton

ex-schoolmate Colby Brooks. "Why?"

The gravity of the shootings only confuses Johnson—as evidenced by the series of letters to Brooks aired on NBC last week. "I honestly didn't want anyone to get hurt," he wrote. "You may not think of it like this, but I have the same pain you'll have. I lost friends like you did. The only difference is, I was the one doing the killing."

Johnson says he doesn't know why he and Andrew Golden, now 12, carried out the massacre. Though the crime was clearly premeditated, Johnson told a court he thought they would just shoot over everyone's head. His mother, Gretchen Woodard, said he didn't learn who'd been shot until three weeks later. "When he was told, I remember his head hitting the table and sobbing and the tears rolling from his eyes," Woodard told NBC News. So why did he do it? Johnson's letters offer only a terrifying lack of self-knowledge: "I was not mad at anyone. I was honestly happy. I had a very loving family."

At first he was reluctant, but Brooks finally decided to correspond with Johnson. "I just feel that he needs a friend too."

—By Bobby Cuzzo

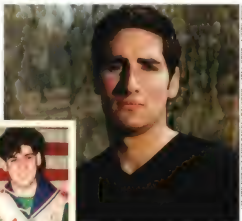
THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA KNEW who its adversaries were. "The three Gs," says its attorney George Davidson, "Girls, godless and gays." On four previous occasions, the Scouts had confronted these would-be infiltrators in court; and four times, the organization had emerged victorious. A California state court chose not to reinstate a scout leader who was kicked out because he was gay; the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear his appeal. Meanwhile, atheists who sued for membership were ruled out of order, as was a woman who wanted to be a scoutmaster. But last week the New Jersey supreme court brought an end to the win streak. In a unanimous decision, the seven justices upheld the membership of James Dale, 29, a gay assistant scoutmaster expelled in 1990.

Dale had spent a dozen years in the group, earning 30 merit badges, rising to the level of eagle scout before becoming an assistant scoutmaster. But then Scout officials saw a photo in a local New Jersey paper that identified Dale as a leader of the Lesbian/Gay Alliance at Rutgers University. The Scouts promptly expelled him. Dale's ouster, the court declared, was "based on little more than prejudice"; he had "never used his leadership position or membership [in the Scouts] to promote homosexuality, or any message inconsistent with Boy Scouts' policies" of being "morally straight" and "clean." The New Jersey court rejected the argument that the Boy Scouts were a private membership organization and had First Amendment rights of "intimate" and "expressive association." In fact, the court referred to the Scouts as a quasi-public entity because of its partnerships with public institutions and facilities. Such accommodation thus put the Scouts in violation of state law prohibiting exclusion based on race, gender, religion or sexual orientation.

The Boy Scouts of America has not been completely resistant to modernization of its membership criteria. After winning the lawsuit brought by the woman scoutmaster in 1987, the group eventually altered its

rules and allowed women to become scoutmasters. But even as New Jersey ordered Dale to be reinstated, the group shows no sign of compromise over gays. Scout lawyer Davidson says he will bring the battle to a new arena: the U.S. Supreme Court. "This ruling unconstitutionally infringes on the rights of the Boy Scouts of America," says Davidson. "It's sad when the state dictates to parents what role models they must provide their children."

Yet experts doubt the Supreme Court will take up the case. Says Georgetown University law professor David Cole: "On a symbolic level this is an extremely impor-



JUSTIFIED: Dale, above, and at his induction as an eagle scout, left



tant decision," a small victory in the struggle of gays and lesbians to participate fully in civil society. However, he adds, "on a technical level, this applies only to the Boy Scouts in New Jersey."

The battleground over gay rights is more likely to move to Vermont. The supreme court there must soon decide if the state's constitution allows gay marriage. A referendum in Hawaii rejected it last year, but in liberal Vermont, the state's justices are more likely to declare in favor. Vermont would then be the first jurisdiction anywhere in the world to allow fully equal marriage rights to homosexual couples. To reverse it, opponents need to go through a two-year process to change the state's charter. During that time, hundreds or perhaps thousands of gay couples could wed.

—By Elaine Rivera.

With reporting by John Cloud





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**KILLING
FIELDS**
Ghoulis
reminders
of a bloody
regime



PHNOM
PENH
Children
play in the
haunted
capital

INTO THE SHADOWS

Will a trial of Khmer Rouge leaders in Cambodia set new furies into motion?

By PICO IYER PHNOM PENH

FOR 20 YEARS NOW, TUOL SLENG HAS been a notorious memorial to the Khmer Rouge killers who ruled Cambodia from 1975 to 1979. Bump down a broken back street in the capital of Phnom Penh, and you come upon a former girls' school, bare except for the rusted beds on which Pol Pot's men interrogated victims, and the U.S. munitions cans they used as toilets. Display cases are littered with the hoes and shovels and iron staves they used to brain people to death; along the walls, hundreds upon hundreds of black-and-white faces stare back at you, dazed or terrified, recalling the people, often children and often themselves Khmer Rouge executioners, who were executed here. One large wall is dominated by a map of Cambodia made up entirely of skulls. Outside, in rough letters, the regulations of the place are writ-

ten out by hand, in English and Cambodian: "While getting lashes and electrification, you must not cry at all."

The Museum of Genocidal Crime, as the road signs call it, has long been one of the principal tourist sites in Phnom Penh, long enough for locals to have stubbed out scores of cigarettes in the eyes of Pol Pot in one photograph. But this spring the monument to the past came into the news again when the man who had overseen the torture for four years, Kang Khek Ieu, generally known as Duch, was suddenly discovered, by foreign journalists, in a western Cambodian village. He was running a crushed-ice stall in the countryside and had certificates of baptism to prove his status as a born-again Christian. The man who oversaw the execution of at least 16,000 of his countrymen had papers from American churches testifying to his "personal leadership" and "team-building" skills.

Like many of his Khmer Rouge comrades, Duch, now 56 and in detention, had been a teacher (educated, it seems, in schools funded by U.S. foreign aid); unlike them, though, he admitted that he had "done very bad things in my life." More recently, he claimed, he had been working for international relief organizations, helping out in local camps. "He was our



BUDDHIST
SERENITY
"If you do
bad, bad
will come
to you"

best worker," said a refugee official when told that the man who had tried to protect children from typhoid was the notorious torturer who had once written "Kill them all" over lists of nine-year-olds.

Thus life hobbles on in a still bleeding, often broken country in which every moral certainty was exiled long ago, and a visitor finds himself lost in a lightless labyrinth of sorts, in which every path leads to a cul-de-sac. On paper at least, this is a time of hope for ill-starred Cambodia. Last year Pol Pot finally died in his jungle hideout, and just before the new year, two of the last three Khmer Rouge leaders, Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea, turned themselves in for a while to the government of Hun Sen. The last Khmer Rouge bigwig still at large, Ta Mok, a one-legged general known as the Butcher, was captured in March and now awaits trial. For the first time in more than a generation, there are no Cambodians in refugee camps across the border in Thailand, and the Khmer Rouge, held responsible for the death of 1.7 million Cambodians during their four years in power alone, are silent.

Yet every prospect of new sunlight in Cambodia brings shadows, and justice itself seems a rusty chain that will only bloody anyone who tries to touch it. To try the Khmer Rouge chieftains would be, in a sense, to prosecute the whole country: almost everyone around—from the exiled King Sihanouk to the one-eyed Prime Minister to the man next door—has some connection to the Khmer Rouge killers. And even those who don't have come to strange accommodations: the local lawyer who agreed to represent Ta Mok lost his wife and 12-year-old daughter to his client's comrades. "So many people killed many people," says a young Cambodian in the western town of Siem Reap. "Even my uncle, he killed many people. That is how my father was safe. So we say, 'If you kill Khmer Rouge, you must kill everyone.'"

Even the sudden death of Pol Pot last year left a hollowness in many Cambodian hearts: the man who obliterated the coun-

try, its society and its fields died, without explanation, just as there was hope of trying him. "I don't want to think more about Khmer Rouge," says Keo Lundi, a gaunt, sad-eyed 39-year-old who shows visitors around the bloodstained floors of Tuol Sleng. "I don't want to know that Duch dies." He bangs his hand against a rusted post. "They killed my brother. They pulled down my life. They took my education—everything—to zero. I want peace."

The prospects for that are better now than they have been for many years: the main war visible in Phnom Penh is among five rival "hand-phone" companies fight-

elegant French colonial buildings behind gates look like haunted houses taken over by squatters too concerned with their survival tomorrow to be worried about upkeep today. Side streets are piled high with rotting garbage, and the small handwritten signs above the open sewers say things like SAVING AIDS AND MADMAN VICTIM ASSOCIATION. Policemen crouch on the sidewalks, playing tic-tac-toe in the cracks of the pavement, and security guards, wearing yellow smiley buttons, frisk you beside the Mekong. The fanciest hotel in town shuts its gates every night, as if to keep the jungle and the darkness at bay.

The potholes extend psychically too, of course: almost every Cambodian you talk to has huge gaps in his life story, long silences. Since Pol Pot eliminated all those with education or knowledge of the outside world, Phnom Penh became a city of country people, as well as a city of orphans, and you still cannot find doctors or teachers or lawyers of a certain age. No one knows what his neighbors suffered, or how exactly they survived. To survive today, school-age girls still sell themselves for \$2 a visit—ignoring what may be the fastest-rising AIDS-infection rate in the world—and children

scramble in the dust for foreigners' coins long after midnight. Their faces, you can't help noticing, are the same as the ones in the torture center.

Amid all the dilapidation, there are gaudy, anomalous explosions of affluence—huge, multistory palaces offering KARAOKE MASSAGE in neon letters, and ads in the local paper for Harry Winston jewels. Much of the money comes, of course, from overseas investors who are eager to make a killing out of need and are gambling that the economy can only improve. "This is the first time since I came here in 1992 when I can feel truly confident of making a profit," says a Singaporean businessman sipping pumpkin soup with gold leaf in it (in a hotel where even the telephone receivers are scented with jasmine). The appetizer alone costs as much as a local judge (generally uneducated) earns in maybe six months.



MEMORIAL Faces from the past watch over the old torture center

ing for the loyalties of ubiquitous cell-phone addicts, and earlier this year the country was finally admitted to the Southeast Asian economic

community, ASEAN. Though brothels still line the streets, women who would otherwise be pushed toward prostitution are now employed in huge numbers—135,000 of them in all—in 165 government factories; and tourists, for the first time in 30 years, can fly directly to the great temples of Angkor, bringing money to the country's empty coffers. Yet the suspicion remains that peace can be acquired only at the expense of justice. To embrace the future, it seems, is to evade the past.

IT IS A CURIOUS THING THESE DAYS TO wander around Phnom Penh, a city of potholes and puddles where most of the

For a certain kind of foreigner, there is a half-illicit thrill in living in a place where the officials are dealing in drugs and girls and antique Buddhas when the guerrillas are not. At night, in the Heart of Darkness bar, the talk is all of \$200 hit-men and whole villages in the business of peddling 13-year-old girls. Pizza restaurants are called Happy and Ecstatic in honor of their ganja toppings, and two of the main sites of entertainment have long been shooting ranges (public and private) where you can lob hand grenades or fire away with M-16 assault rifles. To rent a 24-room guesthouse on a lake, with a view of distant temples, costs \$425 a month.

"I lived for two years without electricity," says a South American restaurant owner, sitting at a café while a woman crouches at her feet, giving her toenails their weekly polish. "Only by candle. It cost me \$2 a week." Wander off the main streets, and you are in a maze of little lanes—completely unlighted and unpaved—where a former Zen monk runs a guesthouse and Africans fleeing either civil war or justice live by teaching English.

In such places Cambodia has the air of a society with no laws, where some protective coating, some layer of civilization, keeping Darwin's jungle remote, has been torn away. The local paper reads as if it had been written by a Jacobean playwright with a taste for black irony. A motorist crashes into the Independence Monument, it says, the seventh such fatality this year. More than 12,000 "ghost soldiers"—nonexistent employees—have been found on the Ministry of Defense payrolls. A Frenchman here to help Cambodia is charged with running a brothel full of underage boys.

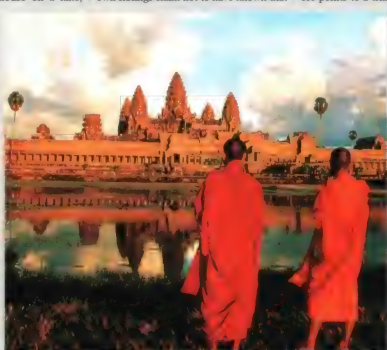
It seems almost apt that half the cars you see have steering wheels on the left, and half have them on the right, ensuring bloody accidents every day.

In the midst of all this, the ones who live among ghosts conduct their own private investigations. "My friends think I'm crazy," says a well-to-do Cambodian who returned here from Canada. "People tell

me, 'Why do you want to look at these things? It's easier to forget.' But I want to understand why it happened"—he means the self-extermination of his country—"so it will never happen again." When Pol Pot died, Keo Lundi, from the Tuol Sleng center, says, "I spent my own money to go to his province, to talk to his brother and sister. I wanted to know what he was like as a child." What he found was that Pol Pot—born Saloth Sar—was a notably mild-mannered boy, pious and delicate, who "never played with a gun" and often accompanied his mother to the pagoda. His own siblings claim not to have known that

emotional diplomat in a Western embassy says, "because everything that has happened in the past year has been staged. So we know already what will happen. They will blame everything on Pol Pot, on others who are gone. Or on the Americans. Or the King. It will be lies."

One sunny holiday, as a visitor inspects carvings of demons and gods and mythological battles at the haunted temple of Angkor Wat, suddenly a Cambodian standing nearby clutches a pillar till his knuckles turn white. "Look," he says, swallowing. "There's Khieu Samphan!" He points to a trim elderly man in white



© GUY ALABON - CORBIS SYGMA

it was their courteous brother who was "Brother No. 1," the man who loosed a national madness.

The hope now is that Duch—perhaps the last Khmer Rouge leader to leave the city when the country's longtime enemies, the Vietnamese, took over in January 1979—may shed some light on what happened. But though the government has, for the time being, acceded to the demands of the world, and the U.N., to hold a partly international tribunal of the Khmer Rouge leaders, almost everyone agrees that terms like justice and democracy are virtual luxuries in a country as desperate as Cambodia, where politics can often look like a Swiss bank account under a false name.

"I don't want to watch the trials," an

ANGKOR WAT Monks look toward the country's steady, sacred center

is of a new future. "We are Buddhists: if you do badly, bad will come to you. Let us shake hands."

Burying the past, though, will not come easily in a country where roughly 50% of children are stunted and urchins in wheelchairs swivel around in front of cybercafés crying, "No have mother!" On the map given to visitors who go to the local tourist center, the text boasts of Cambodia's "wonderful history" and its status as a "land of tolerance and of plenty." Visit the "Choeung Ek Genocidal Center," it urges brightly of the rural equivalent to Tuol Sleng, where executioners once beat babies' heads against trees, adding that Cambodia will be "an inexhaustible source of memories to each one of you." The main sign at the center is a 10-story-high shrine made up of skulls. ■

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NET LOSSES

Plunging prices have left Internet investors battered—and asking again, What are these stocks worth?

BY DANIEL KADLEC

IN THE WORLD OF INTERNET INVESTING, few things are clear. But here's one: after last week's rout, dot.com stocks are 40% to 60% off their peaks, and investors are finding there is no safety net in Netland. For those with faith and a long investment horizon, discounted prices today are compelling. That's why the bloodbath didn't turn into a bigger catastrophe. Early last Thursday, Net stocks were in free fall and touching their lowest levels of the year. Enough investors suddenly viewed them as bargains so that prices turned up.

But for many, Net stocks remain the epitome of pure speculation. On an earnings basis, after all, a company with no profit is as expensive at \$20 a share as it is at \$40.

That's what makes Net stocks so confounding. Most lose money, and predicting when they'll turn a profit and how big that profit will be is sheer guesswork.

Since mid-April, the pessimists have been winning the valuation squabble. Amazon.com, once boasting a market value twice that of Sears, is now about as big as the Sears tool department. Founder Jeff Bezos has seen \$8 billion of his net worth evaporate in four months. Sure, he's still worth \$5 billion, but the roller-coaster ride is taking a toll on less well-heeled entrepreneurs and investors.

"It's been quite an experience," says Jack Marshall, founder of Photoloft.com, which moves pictures across the Net. His stock, traded on the NASDAQ bulletin board, is down 66%, to less than \$3 a share. All 32 of his employees have stock options. The collapse "hasn't really hurt morale because business is so good, we all know we're here for the long term," he says. Still, at many Net firms, the early-year euphoria of optioned employees is gone. Net investors, many of them day-trading online, have had a comeuppance as well. Losses have driven thousands out of the market.

A couple of points bear mentioning.

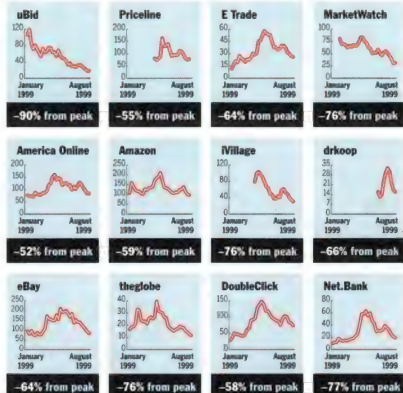
Dow Jones Internet Index



FALLING INTERNET STOCKS...

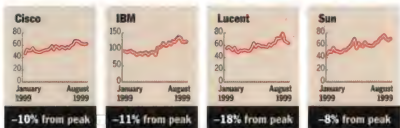
Weekly stock closes. Percentages show decline from 52-week high

... ERODE FORTUNES



SOME TECH STOCKS HAVE BEEN SPARED

Internet plumbers, so called because they make the equipment that makes up the Internet's infrastructure, have stood up well against the storm. Such companies benefit from the Net's growth without having to sell their products over it.



First, Internet stocks are still up for the year—again of 24%, as measured by TheStreet.com Internet index. Second, Net investors who have been at the game longer than six months may still have sizable profits. The carnage has been largely confined to pure Internet stocks—such retailers as Amazon.com and eBay; communities like iVillage.com and TheGlobe.com; media companies Marketwatch.com and TheStreet.com; and portals such as Yahoo and America Online. Many stocks that benefit from the Internet but don't depend on it to sell their goods have held up well. IBM is up

35% since Internet stocks peaked in April.

Why did Net stocks tumble? In retrospect, it seems clear that as they were hitting their highs, speculation had taken over. The average Net stock had risen 475% in the previous six months. Internet initial public offerings were routinely doubling and tripling on the first trade. A pullback was in order.

Rising interest rates helped bring that about. In Wall Street's perverse logic, higher rates, reflecting a robust economy—employment figures last Friday were strong—and the threat of inflation, are seen as negative because they threaten to slow the economy



Jeff Bezos

Amazon

His worth at stock's 52-week high:

\$13 billion

His worth on Aug. 6:

\$5.3 billion



Margaret Whitman

eBay

Her worth at stock's 52-week high:

\$1.6 billion

Her worth on Aug. 6:

\$569 million



Steve Case

America Online

His worth at stock's 52-week high:

\$676 million

His worth on Aug. 6:

\$326 million



Tim Koogle

Yahoo

His worth at stock's 52-week high:

\$100 million

His worth on Aug. 6:

\$52 million

longer term and put off Internet profits further into the future.

Also, there is too much merchandise for sale. A flood of new Internet shares is hitting the market via IPOs this summer. Supply and demand are so out of balance that some of the new issues, such as flower seller FTD.com, were postponed.

Is the selling over? No one knows. "On a valuation basis, there's still plenty of downside left," warns Henry Blodgett, a Merrill Lynch analyst. His main concern is that the explosive growth in the numbers of people going online for the first time is reaching an

James J. Cramer

HOW IT FEELS TO LOSE \$150 MILLION

TheStreet.com



-75% from peak

MY DOT.COM'S BEEN SMASHED! BUT don't cry for me—O.K., you probably aren't—I'll do fine. And so will the business. That's how this entrepreneur consoles himself when he looks at the stock performance of TheStreet.com, a company that came public at \$19 just a few months ago, soared to \$70 on the first day of trading and now finds itself below the offering at about \$18.

It is not unusual for the market to fall in love with a stock, seduce it and then abandon it. What is unusual is for this to happen faster than a college tryst. For TheStreet.com, where I am the largest shareholder and a writer and director, the impact of the decline was more subtle than the fall was jolting. Right out of the box, investors gave us a big market cap—in essence, a club to beat up or buy up competitors. But then they took the club away before we could start swinging. We were looking brash and predator-like—top of the food chain. Now we feel like timid prey. A chart of our stock looks like one half of the Apollo's Chariot ride at Busch Gardens—the first part, which starts at the top. It's been a dizzying decline.

And yet nothing has fundamentally changed at TheStreet.com. We are a real business, still young, that has to pound it out day to day. We even had some good news in a recently announced, better-than-expected quarter, although the market scalding sure does take away from the achievements we feel the company has made. Worse, a Chinese wall keeps me from consoling the journalists who are seeing their riches decrease by the day.

The disconnect between TheStreet.com's performance and that of our stock seems as great to the downside as it was to the upside, when we came public. Both are mystifying to me, even though I am a full-time hedge-fund manager who writes on the side.

Our company hasn't been alone. All of the dot.coms in our so-called cohort, Internet financial-information services and content, saw their stocks similarly sliced and diced. (Indeed, I was doing some slicing myself. My hedge fund has been unloading dot.com stocks as if they were contaminated.) If we had a Dot.coms Anonymous, I don't think my sto-

ry would be any worse than half a dozen other entrepreneurs.

That doesn't make me feel any better. But I am still way ahead of the game, considering my cost basis. That's somewhat more mollifying, and it's been my wife's rallying cry through every handle down in the stock. (A handle is the first number in the quote of a stock, as in \$6, \$5, \$4, \$3, \$2 and now \$1 as the stock becomes a "teenager.")

Oddly, the sell-off could be a godsend in disguise. We need to see the dot.com door close, and close hard. We got our money from the market to grow and prosper, but we would prefer others not to have such good luck. The fewer dot.coms in our space, the merrier.

Ultimately, as someone who, when he started the company, never expected to see the riches, paper or otherwise, I am confident that if we execute our business plan at TheStreet.com, we will see lofty heights again. Until then I am trying to enjoy the ride, whatever the direction. ■

James J. Cramer is a hedge-fund manager and writes for theStreet.com. This column should not be construed as advice to buy or sell stocks.



His worth at 4400's
52-week high:
\$220 million
His worth on Aug. 6:
\$56 million

end. Roughly half the U.S. population is already there, so new users can't keep doubling each year. In fact, the Net selling began just as April data showed month-to-month new users and hours logged on flattening.

Michael Graham, analyst at BankBoston Robertson Stephens, believes the recent carnage has created some no-brainer bargains. He sees Amazon.com as one of those. The 35 biggest traditional retailers have a

market value of \$630 billion, he says, while the 32 biggest online retailers have a market value of just \$53 billion. Graham says that in time those numbers must converge because the online companies are taking business from their bricks-and-mortar competition.

Lacking earnings or some template for a profitable Internet business, that's the kind of analysis Net investors rely on. As a result, "these stocks trade on emotion, not

fundamentals," says Lise Buyer, an analyst at CS First Boston. "Right now there is a significant amount of emotional fatigue."

It will pass. And as promised, the Internet will develop into a grand global facilitator, making us more efficient at work and at play. Some Internet companies—maybe one in 20—will survive to see it, so their stock prices today are bargains. We just don't know which ones they are. ■

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increasing muscular excitability."

- Journal of the American Medical Association



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- Road & Track

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It worked for collectibles.
Now websites are auctioning
workers, and jobs, online

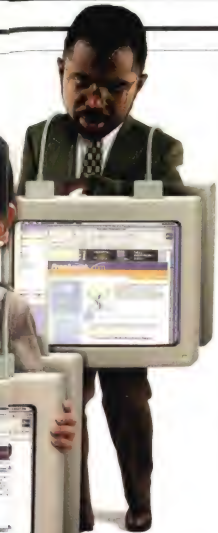
By DANIEL EISENBERG

AMID THE MOUNTAINS OF BASEBALL cards and cookie jars up for grabs on eBay's Net bazaar, one offer stood out this spring: "Team of 16 employees from major ISP willing to leave as a group," the posting read. "Total minimum bid would be \$3,140,000." To even the most avid online collector, this seemed far-fetched—not to mention medieval—as if a package deal of techies could be bartered like a set of Limoges china or *Star Wars* lunch boxes. Surely it had to be a hoax.

Jeff Taylor knew what he was seeing was no joke. Since January, Taylor, the founder of Monster.com, the pioneering online job board, had been hatching his own plans for a Web service that would let job seekers put themselves on the block. And although the eBay geeks didn't sell themselves, the fact that they had given it a go was enough, in Taylor's mind, to "validate the process." So last month Monster rolled out its "talent market," where independent contractors and freelancers can trumpet their skills and put themselves up for auction to prospective employers.

To Taylor, the logic for a human auction is even more compelling than the one for things, and his is one of a number of e-companies that are changing the way employers buy labor. As with eBay, the talent market eliminates the middleman and levels the playing field between buyer and seller. But an antique cigar cutter never has to sell itself. People do. "Marketing themselves is the





MAKE 'EM AN OFFER In today's tighter labor market, workers can flex their bargaining muscle or bid on freelance projects at websites like Monster.com, eLance.com, bid4geeks.com and freeagent.com

most difficult thing for free agents," says Taylor, who heads the interactive division of recruiting ad giant TMP Worldwide, which bought Monster in 1995. "This puts them in the driver's seat."

Sure, athletes are bought and sold all the time; but it sounds ridiculous to shop a UNIX programmer or architect. Yet the timing is perfect for such a bold experiment in the burgeoning field of e-cruiting. Not only is unemployment near record lows, but Silicon Valley is also facing a severe shortage of qualified techies. There are 500,000 vacancies, a number expected to grow to a few million. In such a tight labor market, the Net may be just the tool for the growing ranks of job-hopping free agents to flex their bargaining muscle.

One of the eBay human auctioneers, John Kinsella, recently started an online jobs venture, bid4geeks.com, where techie teams can gauge how much they're worth. Meanwhile, eLance, a Jersey City, N.J., startup founded by two Wall Streeters, will soon launch a different sort of auction, where firms will be able to post projects—white-collar tasks like Web design, consulting and marketing—and solicit bids on them. Another player, Freeagent.com, is set to offer a similar service.

Since the talent market launched a month ago, some 35,000 customers, from programmers to Elvis impersonators, have filled out their profiles, eagerly awaiting an offer they can't refuse. Unlike traditional auctions, though, bids aren't binding—there is more to picking a new boss than simply finding the right salary. So once the auction period ends—anywhere from one to five days—an accepted bid sets the stage to close the deal. "It gives you a starting point," says David Braverman, of Woodmere, New York, who runs a marketing agency and, after a week on the site, is putting final touches on a project with a Web retailing startup.

Not everyone has been so lucky. In fact, individual sellers have vastly outnumbered talent buyers because many companies are wary of a newfangled system that could shift the balance of power. That initial disparity in supply and demand, though, doesn't worry Taylor, who says, "where the job seekers go, the employers will follow."

He should know. As millions of job hunters have flocked to destinations like Monster, Careerpath.com and Careerbuilder.com to post virtual résumés and glean advice, headhunters and corporate recruiters haven't been far behind, shelling out hundreds of millions of dollars to pitch their positions. Since it's faster and significantly cheaper to hire online, in a few years e-cruiting could capture up to half the U.S. search-and-recruitment market, worth some \$30 billion, according to Perry Boyle, an analyst at Thomas Weisel Partners. Monster alone, which will eventually take a cut of \$250 to \$1,000 from firms that make a talent-market hire (the site is currently free), draws close to 3 million visitors a month, according to Media Metrix, helping the site become one of the few profitable Net outfits. It has made a

name for itself with biting TV spots, which feature kids rattling off deadpan lines like "I want to be forced into early retirement."

eLance has its own, radical plan for bringing employers and employees together. After watching how markets dynamically set prices for stocks, bonds and commodities, bond trader Beerud Sheth and portfolio manager Srinu Anumolu figured they could transfer the same efficiency to the job market. With a global pool of talent available to bid on every project, a programmer in Moscow could win an assignment from a firm in Iowa.

Of course, it's possible that eLance could drive wages down by cutting out intermediaries like temp and staffing agencies. But startups pressed for time and cash might welcome a virtual hiring hall of humans. eLance farmed out work on its site to a programmer in Bombay who named the right price online. Says Sheth, "In the real world, you can't hire 500 people over the weekend."

Or, for that matter, just a few. That's why Joyce Schwarz, co-founder of Mayday Interactive, an ad shop based in Santa Monica, Calif., is already sold on Monster's talent market. To get her firm off the ground, she beat out a few rival bidders for a personal assistant and a web designer. "It's not like a temp firm, which may not know my needs," says Schwarz. "It's match-making for business."

Still, it's not yet clear that every boss is ready to be such a solicitous suitor. "The labor market is tight, but we haven't got to the point where people are so valuable that they would entice companies to engage in a bidding war," argues Bob Liu of HotJobs.com. Others contend that no firm would be willing to make a bet solely on the basis of a virtual résumé. Networking giant Cisco, which does two-thirds of its hiring via the Net, says it isn't interested in bidding online for corporate mercenaries.

But as companies have a harder time retaining staff, they may not be able to be so choosy. As John Sullivan, head of human resources management at San Francisco State University, says, "Employees have won the war for talent. They can pretty much demand whatever they want." And thanks to the Net, they may have a better chance of getting it. ■



E-AGENT Monster.com's Jeff Taylor wants workers to sell themselves on the Web

Percentage of Fortune Global 500 firms that actively recruit on the Internet



Charles Krauthammer

Craftsman of the Road

For the disabled, driving an automobile can be a daunting task. Les Schofield makes it easy

WHEN YOU BREAK YOUR NECK AND sever your spine, leaving your legs and hands paralyzed, you don't expect to drive a car. Of course, driving isn't your first concern. There are more elementary needs, like getting across a room or lifting a fork or signing your name.

I know. After a year of post-accident muscle retraining, exercise and long practice, I got the hang of the easy stuff. But one thing I was sure of: I was 22 and I'd never drive again.

And for six years, I didn't. It made life

Then, five years later, I met Les Schofield. I'd heard from Giri, his hair still raised from our road adventures (to unwind, he climbs mountains in Nepal), that a company in Springfield, Mass., was making a new kind of car I should check out. The next morning—I'd waited long enough—my wife and I drove the 80 miles down the Mass. Pike from Boston. We found Schofield, a powerfully built man with a kind, open face and prodigious hands, working on his invention, a prototype as yet driven only by him.

It had started out life as a normal

"You drive from the wheelchair." "Me?"

He tested my biceps, which had survived my injury fairly intact. "You."

It is 20 years and 180,000 driving miles later, and last month Schofield delivered to me the third of his creations. The first was a big, boxy Ford van that he built for me a couple of months after our first meeting, and after I'd spent half a dozen Sundays driving with him in the prototype through the streets of Springfield, testing out his technology and my reflexes. The noble beast, now retired, still stands in my driveway.

The second, a 1990 Dodge Caravan, a wonder of miniaturization—all the stuff of a full-size van hidden under the hood of a minivan—arrived when our son turned six. It turned me into a soccer dad, ferrying him and countless of his friends to school and Little League and all the other appointed rounds of the busy childhood of suburbia (for me, a wondrous place filled with not the wail of ER sirens but the music of kids' bicycle horns).

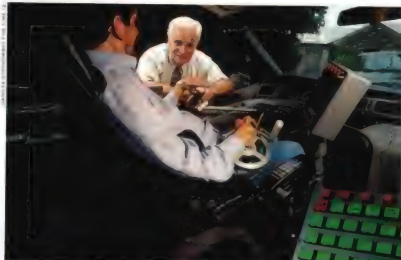
But the third, the one Schofield delivered last month, is his masterpiece, his Sistine Chapel: a sleek Windstar with miniaturized steering wheel, vacuum gas and brake lever, and a single panel of buttons that allows effortless control of all the car's functions (doors, windows, radio, heat, lights)—a triumph of lean and cool understatement.

As is Schofield. He's filled out a bit over these 20 years, but cool and understated, self-composed and self-effacing he remains. His composure, rooted in the

knowledge that in the end he can create and fix and solve anything, endows him with, as Mark Twain once put it, the calm confidence of a Christian with four aces. On shakedown cruises, as unexpected problems pop up, his demeanor never changes: no cocky dismissal, no agonized doubts. He just quietly makes mental notes of the glitches and returns the next day with a fix.

Craftsmanship has its rewards. In this field, unfortunately, they include neither money nor renown. The market is too small, the costs too high. The Springfield company Schofield worked for failed in the mid-'80s. His second outfit went under a few months after he built my Caravan. Which is why he built the latest car, his *summa*, on his own in his garage. Like Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak—except that they had a whole community of computer enthusiasts to draw energy from. Schofield works alone.

It took him 18 months. The lone craftsman spent the first four just think-



AT THE TOUCH OF A BUTTON: Krauthammer gets ready to drive his new Windstar, as the innovative designer looks on

a little bit complicated. Those were years when I was a medical student and resident doctor. Not driving meant that I had to live within wheelchair distance of the hospitals where I was training. And that meant going to sleep every night to the sweet sound of sirens pulling up to my friendly neighborhood emergency room.

It was not the worst fate in the world, but I had always loved to drive, and my few attempts to do so in rehab—driving a Buick with my fearless instructor, Giri Sipajlo, down New York City's F.D.R. Drive—proved unsatisfactory. I kept bumping other cars. Not very hard and not very seriously, but often enough. I gave up.

Dodge van. He had lowered the floor, torn out the driver's seat, steering wheel, brake and gas pedals, and substituted his two magical, Copernican creations: on the right, a long, horizontal column coming out of the dashboard, ending with a small steering wheel that turned with no resistance, as seamlessly as a radio dial; and on the left, a more delicate lever—pull in for brake, push out for gas. With each effortless motion came a whooshing sound as the vacuum pump he'd devised moved the brake or accelerator.

"Where's the seat?" I asked.



ing. Drawing, sketching, inventing. Form to function. How, for example, to operate a turn signal when both your hands are already occupied and your legs are just along for the ride? (Answer: panel mounted near left elbow.) What parts are needed and exactly how can they all fit, entirely hidden, in a vehicle never designed for half these esoteric functions?

After designing most of the parts, he then produced them, borrowing his friend Steve Ruffy's machine shop at night. He then layered them into the vehicle. The result is a marvel of economy and precision. It had to be. There is as little margin for error in Schofield's creations as in the space program (and nearly as many backup systems). Indeed, had he been born in another time and place he might have been building space shuttles. The wiring—357 separate, beautifully hidden lines feeding the remote controls—are like the sinews of a space station, not only for economy of design but for reliability. I've driven his machines more than 180,000 miles, and the unique Schofield controls—vacuum gas and brake, horizontal zero-effort steering—have never failed me.

What does he do now? He talks of retiring with his devoted wife Clare to Virginia or the Carolinas. But at 62, that would be a crime. Schofield is not just that rarity in modern life, a craftsman. He is perhaps the most brilliant designer ever of sophisticated driving devices for the disabled. And more than that. He is a man who sets people free.

HOW TO GET YOUR OWN

■ **LES SCHOFIELD** 42 Grant Hill Rd., Tolland, Conn. 06084; (860) 875-0019. Consultant; tests and advises what you'd need to be able to drive

■ **PETER RUPRECHT, DRIVE-MASTER CORP.** 9 Spielman Rd., Fairfield, N.J. 07004; (973) 808-9709. One of the oldest and most reliable builders of driving systems

■ **BOB KITS, AUTO ASSIST** 5002 Lehigh Ave., College Park, Md. 20740; (301) 699-2238. Unmatched personalized service for adaptive driving

■ **WILLIAM BUTT, DRIVING SYSTEMS INC.** 16139 Runnymede St., Van Nuys, Calif. 91406; (818) 782-6793. Innovative driving devices

■ **INDEPENDENT MOBILITY SYSTEMS** 4100 W. Piedras St., Farmington, N.M. 87401; (800) IMS-VANS. Vans adapted for easy wheelchair entry



I. A. W.

Can a Man of 25 Claim Age Bias?

A New Jersey banker says he was fired for being too young, and he'll get his day in court



IT'S JUST AWFUL TO BE A young adult in America today. Movies venerate our elders; ads fetishize the mature body. And there's nary a million to be found in the new economy for, say, twentysomething computer whizzes. O, to be old!

But now a court has taken up the plight of the young, recognizing in an unusual and potentially groundbreaking decision a new civil right to be green. Earlier this year, the supreme court of New Jersey unanimously ruled that Michael Sisler, 31, can proceed with an age-discrimination suit against Bergen Commercial Bank in Paramus, N.J. The case will go to trial in the near future, but it began in 1993, when Sisler was an employee at New Era, a local bank his grandfather had founded. As Sisler tells the story in court papers, chairman Anthony Bruno of Bergen Commercial, a larger financial institution in the same area, began phoning him at New Era. Bruno said he had heard good things about Sisler. He eventually asked the young man to become Bergen's vice president of credit-card operations—a swank job for anyone, let alone a 25-year-old college dropout. He would make \$70,000 a year and have use of a company car, Sisler said yes. (Duh.)

A few days before Sisler started, Bruno took him to lunch. He then asked a question that had somehow not occurred to him before: How old are you, anyway?

Bruno was floored by the answer. Don't tell anyone, the bank chief warned. Sisler's youth could embarrass co-workers and, worse, anger Bergen's board.

Days after Sisler started the job in September 1993, he got a call from Bruno. It wasn't working out, Bruno said. Sisler asked for a chance to prove himself but says he never got one. Sisler was told to report to a fellow vice president (instead of the chairman) and was assigned to a forlorn branch. In January 1994, Sisler was fired—without cause, he claims.

Sisler cried age discrimination. The bank brushed him off at first, saying that even if it had fired him solely because of his age—which it denied—only older people could sue on such grounds. But after a five-year battle, New Jersey's highest court disagreed, ruling in February that the state's

Law Against Discrimination prohibits bias based on any consideration of age. The case now goes to trial to determine if the bank, in fact, fired Sisler because of his age. (Bergen has never fully told its side of the story. But Bergen lawyer Angelo Genova said Sisler wasn't performing up to the bank's standards before he was let go. The bank has also alleged in a lawsuit that Sisler took files that didn't belong to him.)

The New Jersey decision was unusual. The bank would have already prevailed in most states, where antidiscrimination laws—like the federal one—set a minimum age of 40 for those claiming age bias. The New Jersey ruling wasn't unprecedented, though. In the 1980s, courts in Maine, New York and Oregon allowed similar suits to proceed almost unnoticed. But the New Jersey court has a reputation for issuing cutting-edge rulings in employment law. (The state's liberal decisions on sexual-harassment law foreshadowed a national push to broaden the scope of such law.) Eighteen other states have similar anti-discrimination statutes, with no minimum age. "If the same issue were raised in one of those places, the plaintiff's counsel would say, 'They did this in New Jersey,' and the court would pay attention," says Michael Ossip, chairman of an American Bar Association subcommittee on age discrimination. In other words, next time you tell the new kid down the hall that he needs to pay his dues, you could end up paying them for him.

—By John Cloud/Paramus



Saving Suburbia

Families that seek a sense of community are moving to new suburbs designed to resemble small towns

By TIM PADGETT CHAPEL HILL

EVERYBODY, AT LEAST ONCE IN HIS life, wants to live in a nice small town, right? One with sidewalks, neighbors waving from their porches and a bustling central square within biking distance of your house? Trouble is, despite the growth of telecommuting, most jobs are still in cities and suburbs. That's why the late-'80s experiment of building cute little instant towns in places like Seaside, Fla., never really caught on: many of the communities were too far from major job centers. So now developers are chasing a new fashion. Rather than offer an escape from the suburbs, they're struggling to reinvent them by building cute little instant towns near major cities.

They're finding eager pioneers among couples like Amanda and Michael Hale. The Hales think *sprawl* is too kind a word for conditions they rejected around Atlanta. They call it suburban blight, a strip-malled world void of rituals like walking to a store or enjoying an attractive building. "We want our four children to grow up in a community, not at a highway exit," says

Amanda, 33, a nurse. Michael, 34, director of a charter school in Durham, N.C., says their yen to escape grew urgent this year as alienated kids shot up suburban schools in Colorado and Georgia.

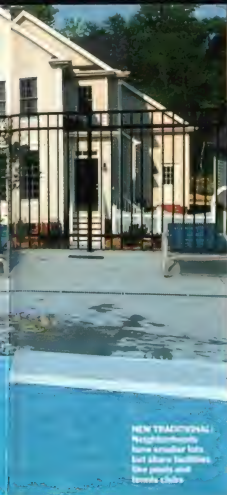
This summer the Hale family moved to a 300-acre development in Chapel Hill, N.C., called Southern Village. Here, as in other neotraditional neighborhoods, residents accept smaller lots than they might find elsewhere, in return for shared amenities like parks and day care, and a livable scale to things. Conveniences like a dry cleaner and café are but a stroll away in the village center. Southern Village's public elementary school sports a columned red brick façade and gabled roof. The homes, built in a variety of styles, from Charleston single to Georgian town house, have porches reaching out to tree-lined sidewalks and narrower streets with slower traffic. It all invites suburbanites to get out of their Toyota Camrys and interact for a change.

If this sounds too much like Mayberry to be practical, think again. The environmental and cultural damage caused by sprawl has become an issue in the presidential campaign. And the idea behind South-

ern Village—traditional neighborhood development, or TND—could reshape the outskirts of cities from North Carolina to Oregon. "I've had to relearn everything we've forgotten since World War II," says D.R. Bryan, developer of Southern Village. "But I do want to start building communities for people instead of for cars."

Five years ago, few neotraditional neighborhoods existed in the U.S. Today more than 100 are up and running, with an additional 200 on the drawing board. The movement's journal, the *New Urban News*, says investment in them has nearly doubled, from \$1.2 billion in 1997 to \$2.1 billion last year. Moreover, local planning boards in sprawl-plagued areas like Miami's Dade County are creating zones dedicated solely to such development.

But because they run counter to many Americans' worship of wide-open living spaces, TNDs are stirring controversy. This summer a proposal for Miami's southwest suburbs, called Salamanca, is in a bitter fight to win government approval. The neo-Mediterranean plan was designed by two architectural gurus of neotraditional neighborhood development, the husband-



NEW TRADITIONAL
Neotraditional
home exterior looks
but offers facilities
like pools and
tennis clubs

wife team of Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk of Miami. It mixes town houses, schools, businesses and parks within walking distance of family homes. The aim is to reduce the constant car trips, wasteful land use, ugly strip malls and the bland homogeneity of ranch houses and office compounds that produce suburban blight in South Florida, where bumper stickers now read LEAVING MIAMI? PLEASE TAKE A DEVELOPER WITH YOU!

But Salamanca has met angry resistance from homeowners in nearby sprawl developments, who fear that its greater density will mean more congestion and declining property values. Dade County commissioners postponed their vote on the project until next month, even though they had already zoned the 160 acres specifically for TND.

Whatever the verdict, Duany insists that neotraditional neighborhoods have a strong future. "Americans are terribly pragmatic," he says. "This idea sells because conventional suburbia failed to deliver on its lifestyle promises." One sign of TND's viability: Salamanca is bankrolled by America's largest residential builder, Pulte

Homes, which says that homeowners in its focus groups consistently endorse the development's design.

Suburbia's original allure was an escape from city problems such as crime and congestion. But, according to Pulte surveys, the main appeal of neotraditional neighborhoods is their renewed sense of community space. Unlike cul-de-sac subdivisions, Southern Village's streets try to create small-town connections that lead somewhere—like the hilltop village square, which has a church and will soon open public spots like a four-screen cinema, grocery and restaurant—essentials of any neotraditional neighborhood that residents say they're getting impatient to see Bryan complete. Each morning residents gather at the café to chat over bagels and eggs with owner Joe Storch. "But if I'm going to keep their loyalty," he says, tacking notices on a bulletin board, "I've got to be more loyal to the neighborhood than Starbucks."

The prospect of a tighter social fabric appeals to many parents who are trying to fathom recent suburban school shootings. Stunned residents of Littleton, Colo., and Conyers, Ga., say raising children may now take a little help from the rest of the village. Be it a shopkeeper, a beat cop or Southern Village retirees, who tutor local kids. Kentlands, a neotraditional neighborhood in Gaithersburg, Md., has erected a youth center, cinema, CD store, pizza parlor and skating rink, giving kids alternatives to faraway malls and bedroom computer games. "I was worried that my kids wouldn't want to hang out so close to home like that," says resident Diane Dorney, 42, "until I noticed how often their friends from outside Kentlands keep coming here." Dorney's teens don't have to drive a car to get a life-important in a country where the number of suburban teen drivers killed in auto accidents is four times that of urban teens killed by guns.

But neotraditional neighborhoods still have to prove that they can deliver on their promises, especially since amenities like community pools can add more than 10% to the cost of homes. It's also tough to sell a \$250,000 house on half the lot space available in sprawl developments. Neotraditional neighborhoods need to fill their housing before small retailers commit to moving in, which can spell a considerable lag time before that cozy winshop arrives.

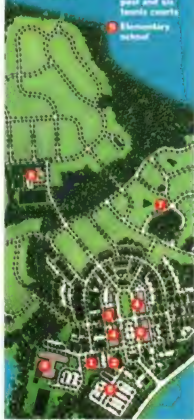
For now, though, the Hales are hopeful. And they have company. Developer Paul Estridge Jr. expected 200 prospects to attend the unveiling in June of Centennial, a New England-style TND near Indianapolis, Ind. But 2,000 showed up—ready to buy into the new small town of their dreams.

What They're Offering ...

Southern Village covers 312 acres (126 in forest) and has a mix of houses ranging from condominiums with prices about \$30,000 to custom houses worth up to \$400,000. Most are within a five-min. walk of the village center.



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. May-care center | 5. Park-and-ride lot |
| 2. Church | 6. Cinema |
| 3. Grocery | 7. Cafe and deli |
| 4. Future shops, offices, restaurants and art bar | 8. Recreation center with a soccer field, swimming pool and six tennis courts |
| | 9. Elementary school |





ALL 124,500 fur seals roared on St. Paul Island, upper right, their home base in the Pribilofs

AN ILL TIDE UP NORTH

The Bering Sea is under assault. Will we exhaust the world's last great fishery?

By EUGENE LINDEN TIE Pribilof Islands

"FALL DOWN AND YOU'RE HISTORY," SAYS VETERINARIAN TERRY Springer as we crawl out on a rickety catwalk over a beach in Alaska's Pribilof Islands. Below us, thousands of fur seals flop around in a frenzy. The 600-lb. bulls herd their harems to protect them from rival males emerging from the brisk waters of the Bering Sea. As the big males toss the 110-lb. females around like beach toys, my first thought is that male fur seals have not yet embraced feminism. Springer, though, has no time for such anthropomorphic musing. The Colorado State University scientist is there to retrieve dead pups, which he gingerly extracts from

the seal-covered shore by snagging them with a noose on a long pole. He'll take the tiny corpses back to a lab for autopsies. The work will tell him what ailed the pups when they died—and give him clues to the health of the entire fur-seal population.

That's not just academic information. For as the seals and other marine mammals go, so goes the whole Bering Sea ecosystem. Spanning the oceanic divide between the U.S. and Russia, it is one of the richest and most commercially productive marine environments on earth, teeming with pollack and halibut, fur seals and Steller's sea lions, horn puffins and murres. The seals and seabirds depend on catching fish, and so do humans. More than 2,000 boats from the U.S., Russia, Japan, Norway, China, Poland and the Koreans haul in an annual catch worth roughly \$1 billion. The portion taken off the shores of Alaska alone amounts to one-half the sea life caught by commercial fishing vessels in U.S. waters.

But will the bounty last? Since the majority of the world's fisheries are in a state of collapse, as too many boats chase too few fish, conservationists fear the same fate for the Bering Sea, the last great refuge of marine abundance. Competition among countries

for the rights to fish certain sectors of the sea is already fierce and could turn violent, as it has elsewhere in the world. The Russians have severely depleted fish stocks in their zone, and the international area open to all boats, called the Doughnut Hole, has been nearly stripped of commercial fish.

No species is more important to man and beast than pollack, the No. 1 ingredient of frozen fish sticks and the fish items served by chains like Burger King and Long John Silver. Each year the Bering Sea yields 4 billion lbs. of this bottom-dwelling creature, making the pollack business the biggest fish harvest in the world.

On the surface, that business is healthy: the pollack catch has stayed near



THE FOOD CHAIN: EVERY LINK IS VITAL

NUTRIENT-RICH deep water flows over the continental shelf, providing food for ...

PHYTOPLANKTON, which thrive as days lengthen during the spring, feeding ...

ZOOPLANKTON, as well as small crustaceans and larval fish. These tiny creatures become supper for ...

SMALL FISH, like pollack, right, along with herring, mackerel and Pacific cod, which in turn feed ...

LARGER FISH, DIVING BIRDS, MARINE MAMMALS AND HUMANS, the final harvesters of the Bering Sea's wealth

ORCAS, WHALES

PUFFINS, ALBATROSS

HUMANS

HALIBUT, SALMON

STELLER'S SEA LIONS, NORTHERN FUR SEALS

PHOTOS: TOP, BRUNO N. NAY; CORBIS OUTLINE; NAT'L. GEO. NEWS; FRANK DELVALLS



record levels. But signs of overfishing and an ailing ecosystem can be seen higher up in the food chain. The fur-seal population has not increased despite a long-standing ban on commercial hunting. The number of Steller's sea lions, which feed mostly on pollack, has plunged 80% since the 1970s, and seabirds such as the red-legged kittiwake are also in trouble.

The pollack harvest may be huge, but that doesn't mean the fish is still abundant everywhere. If commercial fishermen overfish a spot near nursing sea lions, both mothers and pups can starve. That's why the Trustees for Alaska, a public interest law firm, has sued the U.S. government for failing to protect areas vital to endangered marine mammals. The group's litigation director, Peter Van Tuyn, points out that in southeast Alaskan waters, where there is little industrial fishing of pollack, the sea lion population has held up relatively well. And fur seals in the Pribilofs have done better than sea lions, perhaps because they have a more varied diet.

Less fortunate are other creatures that get in the fishermen's way. Dorothy Childers, executive director of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council, notes that



SURVIVOR The Arctic fox is one of the few land mammals that endure Pribilof winters

fishing boats aiming to catch pollack dump halibut and salmon over the side and that the value of wasted fish in the Bering Sea is equivalent to 25% of the revenues from the entire fishery. Many trawlers drag nets and other gear across the sea floor, destroying the habitat of all the animals that live on the bottom. International agreements restrict the size of fishing nets, but environmental groups like the World Wildlife Fund urge stronger action: enforcing a new agreement to stop bottom trawling for pollack, reducing the pressure on certain areas and putting critical habitats off limits.

Even if fishing is brought under control, the Bering Sea faces threats that originate thousands of miles away. Wind currents from industrial areas far to the south bring

in pollutants like insecticides and heavy metals, which collect in the tissues of wildlife and the local Inuit people. At the same time the region has been warming up, and part of the reason may be the buildup of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Whatever the cause, sea ice has been retreating farther to the north,

making life harder for polar bears and other ice-dwelling animals.

Asked which threat to the region is most pressing, Terry Springer replies with a fable of a puppy crossing the river with a knapsack. As the little dog crosses the river, people gradually add stones to the knapsack until the puppy drowns. "Which stone killed the puppy?" asks Springer.

The Bering Sea is far from dead, but the past offers warnings about the future. The famed George's Bank fishery off New England and Canada was once choked with cod. Now the population is so depleted that cod fishing has been banned in much of the area until the species recovers. In the still vibrant waters between Alaska and Siberia, humanity has another chance—perhaps the last chance—to prove it can take care of a crucial marine ecosystem.

IN BRIEF

It's Back! Cassini Flies By

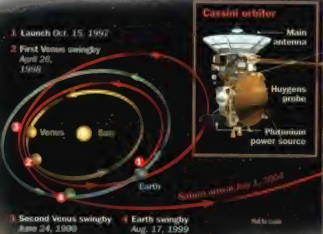
Closing in at 42,500 m.p.h., one of the largest and most complex spacecraft ever built will pass only 725 miles from Earth early next week on its way to a 2004 rendezvous with Saturn, its spectacular rings and its giant moon, Titan. The ship is Cassini, and while it's an object of pride for space scientists, it's an object of fear for antinuclear activists.

Weighing in at around six tons at its launch in October 1997, Cassini lacked the rocket power to fly directly out to Saturn, which is on average 800 million miles from Earth. Instead it headed inward, swooping twice around Venus for "gravity assists" to increase its speed. Its upcoming encounter with Earth will boost its velocity further, and a flyby of Jupiter in 2000 will give the ship the

final kick it needs to reach Saturn.

It is next week's approach that frightens the activists. Should Cassini pass too close to Earth and burn up in the atmosphere, they warn, radioactive plutonium in the generators that provide the craft's electricity could cause millions of cancer deaths. Most scientists and doctors scoff at such claims. Any plutonium vaporized in an accident, they explain, would be so diluted in the atmosphere that it would pose no real threat to most people. Still, activists say, had Cassini been equipped with solar panels for electricity, all danger could have been averted.

But Saturn receives only a hundredth of the sunlight Earth does, and solar panels needed to supply Cassini at that



distance would have to be far too large for such a mission. Other than plutonium generators, says physicist James Van Allen, discoverer of Earth's radiation belts, "there is no practical source of electrical power for spacecraft that go to the outer planets."

At week's end, controllers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory reported that Cassini, having already flown more than a billion miles, was in excellent shape. All systems were operating well, and the craft was on course for a flyby of home.

—By Leon Jaroff

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The Ford File and Its Surprises

The former President recalls that surreal moment 25 years ago

By HUGH SIDLEY

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO LAST SUNDAY night, there were thousands of people in Lafayette Park, eager witnesses to the final act of Richard Nixon's tortured presidency. Many of them were weeping, others cheering. Dan Rather was sitting on a chair, under spotlights, in mordant tones announcing the end of a political world.

Most others on that Aug. 8, 1974, were searching the façade of the nearby Old Executive Office Building and wondering behind which of the lighted windows sat Vice President Gerald Ford, who the next day would become the most powerful man in the world, a man who last week thought back and said, "I never asked for it. I never wanted it. But I never was afraid of it."

Ford laughed when he talked about his assumption of power. He and his wife Betty had been worrying about furniture and drapes for the new Vice President's residence up on Observatory Hill. Ford knew a political fire storm was on the way. But he kept hearing whispers from others about Nixon's ambivalence: fight, don't fight, hang in, resign. "I was 90% certain that sooner or later he had to resign," recalled Ford. "It was certain the die was cast for impeachment. If Nixon had decided to fight the House

DICK, THE MOVIE: Kirsten Dunst and Michelle Williams play a funny Deep Throat duo



A NEW DAY: Ford almost fixed the line about "our long nightmare" ending

surd in which two teenage girls are Deep Throat, the long-dead Nixon dog Checkers is transposed to the White House and detests his President, G. Gordon Liddy looks like a yuppie Groucho Marx, and Pat Nixon snores like a truckdriver.

Most real teenagers probably think "Tricky Dick" is a hip-hop band. Middle-agers weaned on Oliver Stone won't find Nixon nearly malevolent enough. But those of us who remember Watergate

and the Senate, it would have been a terrible thing for the country."

Nixon called a Cabinet meeting for that Tuesday, Aug. 6. Ford felt that the President was in fantasyland. There were demonstrators along Pennsylvania Avenue. The headlines screamed for Nixon's resignation. Nixon wanted to talk about inflation and the U.S. economy. Ford stared across the Cabinet table in wonder at this odd tableau. "The 'smoking gun' tape was out—the country was up in arms about it," recounted Ford. "Nixon was just plain out of touch, and his mind off there somewhere."

"That is when I read a statement that I could no longer defend the Administration or participate on the President's behalf," recalled Ford. "I looked over at Nixon, and he was shocked. I wasn't sure

what would happen. Then the strangest thing of all took place.

Instead of blowing up or criticizing me, Nixon complimented me for taking exactly the right position. I would not say he was mentally incompetent then, but he was strained emotionally."

Ford has watched with interest over these 25 years as the books, movies, plays and television programs have rolled forth about Watergate and Nixon, the good, the bad and the unspeakable. "The people who do these things are exploiting the worst part of Nixon's personality," says Ford. "It is unfair. He had many achievements." The latest piece of Nixonmania is *Dick*, a movie of the ab-

will get many twinges seeing the White House and the presidency once again the setting for wretched comedy. In the world of black humor, however, the true Watergate story was far more hilarious.

Ford has said very little over the years about the Nixon tapes that thrust him into the presidency. But there is a part of them that still upsets him. "One of the most disappointing things about Nixon was that language he used as revealed in the tapes," recalled Ford. "I knew Dick Nixon for 25 years, and I never heard him use that kind of language, not in conversations with me. I was so shocked by it that I asked Henry Kissinger if he had ever experienced Nixon using such foul language. He hadn't either. That opened up a bad side of Dick Nixon. That was very disappointing."

Ford is resigned to history's continuing struggle to sort out the Watergate tangle, including the shadow that follows him over his pardon of Nixon. Few people who know Ford believe he is hiding a great secret about that decision, or about anything else. He is a stranger to guile. Just last week he was chuckling again over the most famous line he uttered as President: "My fellow Americans, our long national nightmare is over." It was not his line, and he almost rejected it.

"When I felt it was pretty certain Nixon was going to resign, I asked my aide Bob Hartman to write a speech for my swearing-in," said Ford. "He was a late-night operator, and he brought me a draft the morning before. I wasn't sure I wanted the 'nightmare' line in the speech. Bob blew up. He stamped toward the door and said, 'To hell with it. If that line is not in the speech, I'm quitting.' I read the speech over a few more times, and I got to like that line better. So I used it in the speech. And that is the line that everybody remembers."





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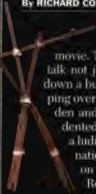
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C I N E M A

BLAIR WITCH CRAFT

Mix eye of Heather with a pinch of horror, promote well and serve the film event of '99

By RICHARD CORLISS



IN OCTOBER OF 1997, THREE YOUNG ACTORS WENT INTO the woods near Burkittsville, Maryland, to play in a horror movie. Twenty-two months later, their film was a smash ... and the talk not just of Hollywood but of America. You could hardly walk down a bustling street last week or log on to a website without tripping over that ominous incantation "Blair Witch." The impact, sudden and seismic, of *The Blair Witch Project* is utterly unprecedented. Never has a—let's be honest—*weird* movie budgeted at a ludicrously low \$35,000 stormed both the box office and the national pop consciousness. In its first week of wide release, on 1,101 screens, it earned \$50 million—more than the Julia Roberts comedy hit *Runaway Bride*, which played in nearly three times as many venues. It is likely to have the highest percentage of profit in film history. Its astounding success has made indie-film heroes of its directors, Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez. And the marketers at Artisan Entertainment, who built fervid want-see for the film through cunning use of the Internet, have been credited with revolutionizing the way films are sold.

Money and marketing are just part of the lure. This minimalist horror film, which appears to be a self-filmed documentary of three filmmakers who get lost in the Maryland woods while tracking down a local witch legend, has become the Elvis, the E.T., the Pet Rock of 1999—the hottest item in a hot summer. Shagadelic—what's that? Jar Jar Binks—remind me, Ricky Martin—isn't he Dino's kid? For this moment (and treasure it, because it may vanish as fast as it materialized), *Blair Witch* is the must-attend social event for plugged-in America.



Faced with this out-of-nowhere phenomenon, Hollywood cheers and shudders. Any movie that scares up business is considered good for the rest of the industry. But this one became a hit by breaking too many rules. No-star indie films usually make money with charm and sentiment; *Blair Witch* has neither. So the mass audience will accept something strident, elliptical, confrontational—what next? The movie was shot with its actors' being put through an eight-day survival game. They shot the film and made up the dialogue while the directors lurked out of sight and played sneaky tricks on them. Don't let James Cameron hear about this!

If the product was eccentric, so was the peddling, what Artisan co-president Amir Malin calls "guerrilla marketing tactics." *Blair Witch*'s creative team, known as Haxan Films, hustled the movie's clips onto John Pierson's *Split Screen* cable show, premiered its trailer on the insider *Ain't It Cool* News website and launched its own site, www.blairwitch.com, which, on an eventual investment of \$15,000, had racked up 75 million hits by week's end. If Artisan can create an avid audience on cable and in cyberspace, why is Fox or Warner Bros. spending tens of millions advertising in the papers and on prime time? No wonder Hollywood, looking at *Blair Witch*, says both Wow! and Uh-oh!

The reaction of moviegoers is no less schizophrenic. Scan their faces as they enter the theaters playing *Blair Witch*. The anticipation is electric; this could be a fantasy reunion concert of all four Beatles. Many in the audience are escorted by hipper acquaintances who have seen the film and are back not to watch it again but to watch their friends watch it. And though those in the know will urge people to see *Blair Witch*, they won't spill its secrets. (Warning: we will.) The film is a rite of passage, fraternity hazing and haunted-house trip rolled into 81 agitated minutes.

Theater owners will endure a dip in popcorn sales. During this film, almost nobody leaves. Except to be sick. Some viewers have vomited dur-

ing particularly tense scenes. Others get motion sickness from the jerky camera style. At the picture's climax, a Chicago woman let out a full-throttle scream. She was still shaking as the lights came up. "I'm too upset to talk," she said as a friend comforted her with a hug.

When the picture ends, reactions vary wildly. Some customers are plainly smitten. "It was every scary story you ever heard as a kid coming to life," says Matthew Smith, 24, in Chicago. Smith isn't bothered by the film's no-tech grittiness: "If you want special effects, rent *Titanic*."

SEVERAL PATRONS TRY TO SHRUG off the icy fear the film's neural refrigerator has locked them into. A trio of teens emerging from a screening in Alexandria, Va., refuse to walk to their car, parked near a woodsy area, because "that movie scared me to death," says Shawna Daniels, 14, "and I'm not ever going near the woods again!" A ticket taker graciously walks them to the car. When asked if he has seen the film, he replies, "Not on your life. I don't want to be that scared." For others, the thaw will take longer. Kim Bingham, 33, of Santa Cruz, Calif., says that a week after seeing the movie, her 14-year-old daughter "still can't sleep at night. She doesn't want to talk about it. She won't go outside to feed the dog because she has to pass by some trees, and they remind her of the movie."

Not all reactions are sacred or scared. Justin Renfro, 27, an Atlanta exterminator, shrugs and says, "I guess I didn't get it." He will advise friends to "wait for the video." After a midnight show at the Angelika, the indie showplace in lower Manhattan where *Blair Witch* had its theatrical premiere on July 14, a vocal minority is shouting, like a high school football cheer, a chorus of "Bullllllah...!" But a few persist in believing, even after the final cast and credit roll, that this clever fiction is for real—a documentary that ends in death. "You mean it's not?" asks stunned Chi-



THEY DID IT: A dream come true for Myrick and Sanchez

THE BLAIR WITCH PROFIT

SHOOTING THE MOVIE took eight days in October 1997. Now for the hard part: getting people to want to see the thing. Here's how they did it, from whisper to buzz to big box-office noise, in only 21 steps.

AUG. 1997

The film is mentioned on John Pierson's *Split Screen* show

JUNE 1998

The filmmakers' own website first appears (www.blairwitch.com)

JAN. 6, 1999

Harry Knowles mentions the film on his *Ain't It Cool* News website

JAN. 23

The film is shown at the Sundance Film Festival. As part of its promotion, "Missing" leaflets are put up all over Park City with the faces of the three "lost" filmmakers. Artisan buys film for \$1.1 million

APRIL 1-30

Artisan screens the film at 40 colleges in the top 20 markets across the country

APRIL 2

First trailer appears on *Ain't It Cool*

MAY 19

Shown at Cannes Film Festival

MISSING



cagoan Paula Taylor. "The website made it sound as if it was. I can't believe it."

The website handsomely elaborates on the film's plot by presenting "documents" about the "Blair Witch Mythology, Aftermath and Legend." Anyone who wants to believe in the story or enjoys a smartly designed fiction can browse and learn.

On Blair bulletin boards, fans and foes gather around the Internet cracker barrel to swap certainties. "Seeing *The Blair Witch Project* is the most terrifying experience, cinematic or otherwise, that I've ever had in my life," JJ-Spaceboy posted last week. RHinkley demurred: "I snuck in and I still felt ripped off." And SNUK! got that familiar trepidation: "The bad thing about it is the fact that I live in a heavily wooded area, with a cemetery dating back to the 1750s half a block away, it's really late, and my three dogs need to go for a walk. I think they can wait 'til daylight..."

The biggest *Blair Witch* shock has been felt by the movie's directors. "When we did the film," Sanchez says, "we hoped for a video or cable deal. When Artisan told us the film would be released in theaters, we were thinking, 'Man, if we make \$10 million, it'd be a dream come true. But to do \$29 million in one weekend was so beyond our comprehension. If anyone had said that a year ago, we would have had him committed.'"

"Now hold on," say the six of you who are just back from Borneo. "Blair *which?*" For you, and for those who have seen the movie and still don't get it, a little backstory. Or, as they say, mythology.

Myrick, 35, a native Floridian from Sarasota, and Sanchez, 30, who hails from Maryland and attended Montgomery College there, met in 1990 while film students at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. A few years ago, Myrick says, "we got on the subject of old documentaries like *In Search Of...* and *Chariot of the Gods* and a 1972 feature called *The Legend of Boggy Creek*—all these pseudodocumentary programs that really creeped us out when we were kids. Later on, we came up with

the premise of the three filmmakers' getting lost in the woods. Our movie would be about the found footage. From there it germinated into building this mythology."

The premise: the town of Burkittsville, once Blair, is haunted by stories of a witch who for two centuries lured children to her home and, so the legend goes, made some of them face the wall while she killed the others. For a film project, three Montgomery College students have come to Burkittsville to shoot a documentary project. They'll interview the locals and spend a couple of days tracking down the witch's house in the nearby woods.

The three—director Heather Donahue, cameraman Joshua Leonard and sound man Michael Williams (the actors use their real names)—think it will be a lark, but they have underestimated the legend's potency and overestimated their own skills in camping and coping. Within a day or two, they are lost and sawing on one another's frayed nerves. At night, huddled in their tent, they begin to suspect menace from someone or something outside. Could it be the Blair Witch? They hear noises, feel a rattling of the tent, find three small cairns and twigs bundled in an ominous symbol and, one morning, notice slime all over Josh's backpack. One of the three disappears. The remaining two finally come upon the witch's house, and there...

Through it all, they kept filming and videotaping the ordeal. A year after their disappearance, their footage was found...

The original idea was to surround this story of three kids, lost and grumpy in the woods, with other pseudodocumentary filler: archival material on the witch legend, interviews with local police officers and friends of the missing students, all tied together by a suitably questing narrator. The trope is familiar enough, both from that oxymoronic phrase "reality TV" and from fake-umentary murder movies, such as the 1979 *Cannibal Holocaust* and the current *Drop Dead Gorgeous*. The *Last Broadcast*, a slick thriller assembled on a desktop computer in 1997 for—get this—\$900, mixes interviews and "found

MAY 10

Second trailer premieres on MTV

JUNE 11

Third trailer appears before *Star Wars*; it is so stoke curiosity, it is only 40 seconds long

JUNE 23

Advertising begins in alternative weeklies, like the *Village Voice*

75,000 promotional pamphlets announcing the book are handed out

Advertising begins in the mainstream newspapers

Radio advertising begins

Comic book released

Curse of the *Blair Witch* special first airs on the Sci-Fi Channel

TV promotion begins and CD is released

Commercial debut at Manhattan's hip Angelika Film Center

Film opens in 26 more "downtown" theaters in 25 cities nationwide; becomes a hot ticket as long lines form

Opens in total of 1,101 theaters

Opens in total of 2,142 theaters

The book, *Blair Witch Project: Dossier*, comes out and the film's directors appear on the cover of *TIME*





footage" in its story of a cable-TV crew that goes into New Jersey's Pine Barrens in search of a legendary monster; the crew calls this trek "the Jersey Devil project." There is betrayal, death and a twisty climactic frisson in this dark, media-mauling parable. The similarities between it and *Blair Witch* prove that for film, video or digital artists, self-reflexive stories are in the air.

Blair Witch, like any movie, has many antecedents. It is, by our casual count, the 873rd horror movie about youths who go into the woods on a lark and come out on a slab; the 4,982nd in which people disappear in reverse order of star quality; and the zillionth in which kids are frightened into a state of suicidal stupidity. Horror's evil creatures don't have to be very cunning when the heroes keep wandering in circles or deeper into the old dark house.

Is it good or bad that as viewers come out of a horror movie, they can't decide exactly what happens in the final shot (hint: recall what the witch made the kids do) and who the villain is (one guess: the missing filmmaker)? We'll say good, that ambiguity can coexist with atrocity. The film

also plays upon the horror genre's attraction-repulsion for the filmgoer: what-happens-next? vs. why-am-I-watching-this? It makes canny use of dramatic longeurs. It's scary even when nothing happens, because something awful might, and, *ack!*, right now! Anticipation is all. Anxiety is a more powerful emotion than shock. Knowing we are to die is worse than dying.

IN COMMON WITH EARLIER INDIE horror classics like *Night of the Living Dead*, *Last House on the Left*, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, *The Evil Dead*, *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*, the new film makes a virtue of its seeming artlessness. A picture's dead air, ragged acting and extreme shifts of emotional tone throw the viewer off balance. This is not your standard Hollywood movie, whose technical finesse reassures even as it excites. The bizarre indie horror films seem unmediated, out of control, a blurred or garish snapshot of lunacy. It's as if

the footage had been found, a year later, and all that's left is a grainy record of awful happenings.

But something else attracted critics and the first knowing viewers to *Blair Witch*, and that is the film's bold sense of withholding. Horror, after all, is a genre that gravitates to the lurid edge. The jaded audience wants more—more teasing sex, more gross-out gore. So directors make their young minor characters play the sin-and-repent game: you have sex, then you die horribly. Makeup maestros like Tom Savini (*Dawn of the Dead*) dream up (or nightmare up) grotesque faces and prostheses. Screaming violins italicize the killer's abrupt entrance as he raises his knife behind the fair maiden.

Then there's *Blair Witch*. It has no sex or even sexual tension, no music of any kind, no demonic power tools. No prowling, voyeuristic camera from the killer's

THE TOWN

Welcome to Burkittsville

YES, HEATHER, THERE IS A BURKITTVILLE, MARYLAND. IT'S a lovely little town of some 200 souls, whose old homes, festooned with flowers and flags, make Mayberry look like Milwaukee. The good folks of Burkittsville can even handle a media frenzy, seeing as all those *Blair Witch* doings supposedly took place here. "I don't mind," says postmaster Larry Ott of the strangers dropping in to snap photos and buy postcards. "It takes the boredom out of the day."

Joyce Brown, the town's part-time mayor, doesn't care for the film's subject matter—"When it comes to witchcraft, we're a Christian community"—but is savvy enough to have ordered up a town website to set the record straight. Other locals see *Blair Witch* as a kind of mistaken-identity comedy. "Everybody's kind of laughing," says Robin Goetz, a library clerk. "Why, no one



GRAVE RUBBERS: Fans are seeking out the local cemetery

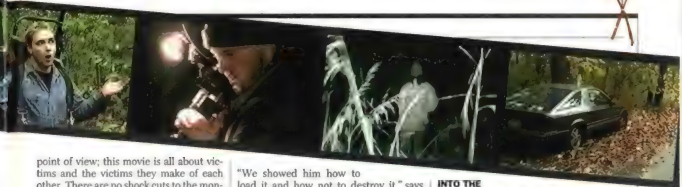
could get lost in our woods. All you'd have to do to get out is walk down toward the farm property."

A few visitors just aren't polite. A sign that read **WELCOME TO BURKITTVILLE—FOUNDED IN 1824** was stolen, and someone left a candle burning in the cemetery. "That wouldn't have been a problem, except for the drought," says Sergeant Tom Winebrenner of the Frederick County sheriff's office, which fields 30 to 40 calls a day about the film. "Many still think it's a true story. When you tell them the truth, they think there's a conspiracy and a cover-up."

The truth, eh? We know a guy who can sniff that out, and he works not far away, in Washington. Fellow name of Fox Mulder.

—R.C. Reported by Melissa August/Burkittsville





point of view; this movie is all about victims and the victims they make of each other. There are no shock cuts to the monster. In fact, no visible monster! Because the audience sees only what the camera does. At night it is sometimes pitch-black; for excruciating minutes, we are literally in the dark. The physical mayhem is limited to one conk on the head. There's no slashing—except of everything extraneous to the creation of psychological disorder. *Blair Witch* tweaks Mies van der Rohe's dictum into "Less is morbid" and makes the viewer collaborate actively in both the scenario and the scariness. Says Sanchez: "Horror is something that works in the viewer's mind, not really onscreen."

Myrick and Sanchez had tried to cast their main characters for two years before finding Donahue, Leonard and Williams. They gave the actors a 35-page plot outline and a lesson or two in handling a camera. Josh got an old CP-16-mm film camera.

"We showed him how to load it and how not to destroy it," says Myrick. "But he treated it like a boat anchor anyway." Heather was given a High-8 video camera. The directors bought the High-8 for \$500 at Circuit City. After the shooting, they returned it and got a refund.

For eight days and nights in autumn 1997, the actors were effectively on their own. They shot all the footage, as their characters were putatively doing, and invented their dialogue. Says Myrick: "We took the Method approach to the acting and the filming over eight straight days, 24-7." The directors were usually out of sight and hearing from their stars. Each day they would leave notes in a box for each actor; they gave general instructions—clues, really—on what to do. If

INTO THE WOODS: The actors Williams, Leonard and Donahue make the terror seem real

Mike were to confess he'd jettisoned the map, the others wouldn't know until he said it. And at night, when the actors were in their tent, says Sanchez, "we'd go out on our raids and scare them—wake them up, leave things behind. We basically played the *Blair Witch*."

At the end, they had 20 hours of footage. Their plan had been to follow that with the "documentary" scenes and, says Sanchez, "treat the footage almost as if it were real. But it turned out to be just so real." Suddenly they had a *faux cinéma vérité* thriller. "We knew it was different, and a risk. But as rough and as raw as it was, we knew we should leave it alone." They had their movie. They trimmed the woods foot-

THE STUDIO

They Believed In the Magic

IF A BLOCKBUSTER FALLS IN THE woods, does anybody hear it? When movie buyers first saw *The Blair Witch Project* at January's Sundance Film Festival, the silence from bidders was deafening. Some bored viewers even walked out during the premiere; others were too afraid to walk home afterward. The acquisitions team of independent studio Artisan Entertainment also felt divided, but figured the cheapo horror flick had at least enough potential to justify an offer of \$1.1 million for worldwide rights. With U.S. box office now climbing toward \$100 million, it may have been the smartest deal since Peter Minuit bought Manhattan for a handful of trinkets.

Regarded, until now, as a Hollywood fringe player, Artisan hopes to define itself as a brash alternative to the established indies. "We don't want to be another Miramax or New Line," says co-president Amir Malin, formerly co-president of October Films. "We want to be involved with hip, off-center movies that skew toward younger audiences between 18 and 35." Artisan, which is run by the



HAPPY CAMPERS: Artisan's Block, Malin and Curcio, sky-high over their hit

triumvirate of Malin, longtime agent Bill Block and Mark Curcio, a former consultant to Artisan's majority backer, Bain Capital, rose in 1997 from the ashes of a firm that held video rights to *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* and *Total Recall*. The company gets its primary income from a film library of 6,600 ti-

des that generates an annual \$35 million in cash flow, but it scored its first cult hit with 1998's dark fantasy *Pi*. Coming are more genre films, including Roman Polanski's *The Ninth Gate*, as well as works from directors Atom Egoyan, Steven Soderbergh and Jim Jarmusch.

For now, though, Artisan is basking in its good fortune with *Blair Witch*. Its executives plan to meet with the filmmakers this week to discuss sequels and prequels. The film's success has even earned Artisan higher visibility on Wall Street, where there's been talk of an IPO or debt offering. In at least one way, however, Artisan does hope to emulate its chief indie rival, Miramax. "In five years' time," says Block, "we certainly want to win an Academy Award for Best Picture." *Blair Witch in Love*, anyone? —By Jeffrey Reissner

THE PREDECESSORS

They Came from Beyond

SURE, HOLLYWOOD CAN OCCASIONALLY THROW A SCARE INTO AN audience. The ravenous extraterrestrial in *Alien*. Jack Nicholson going bonkers in *The Shining*. The thought of a sequel to *Big Daddy*. But the scariest cinematic moments, for the most part, have come courtesy of low-budget independent films that, like *The Blair Witch Project*, arrive unheralded from outside the Hollywood mainstream to chill us with their grungy lack of artistry. These films disorient moviegoers by removing the usual Hollywood guideposts that subtly reassure us it's only a movie: recognizable stars, slick production values and a respect for ordinary dramatic conventions—like the triumph of good over The Evil. Only after we're planted in our seats, eyes bulging out and hands gripping the armrests, do we realize we're at the mercy of people who don't play by the usual rules, who are capable of ... anything.

The archetype of these renegade fright fests is *Night of the Living Dead*, George Romero's 1968 horror film about ghouls who rise from the grave to devour the living. Made by a bunch of unknowns in Pittsburgh, Pa., for a piddling \$114,000, the film has a grainy look, cheesy acting and a preposterous premise. But the characters we root for are eliminated with grisly dispatch, and the claustrophobic tension mounts so ruthlessly that many early filmgoers had to leave the theater midway—in shock. Sequels and imitators notwithstanding, it remains the most terrifying movie ever made.

Poverty-row chillers were a staple in the 1950s, with a string of lower-than-lowbrow horror movies by such directors as Roger Corman (*Not of This Earth*) and William Castle (*The Tingler*), films that were enjoyable in direct proportion to our sense that they were made without adult supervision. The tradition was carried on by filmmakers like David Cronenberg; though later celebrated for the high-toned horror of *The Fly* and *Dead Ringers*, he never matched the shocks of his early, amateurish offerings such as *Rabid* and *They Came from Within*. The *Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, directed by Tobe Hooper in 1974, was almost comical in its killer-on-the-loose hysteria, but it set a new standard for slasher films to come. The masterpiece of the genre remains John Carpenter's *Halloween* (1978). Despite some Hollywood credentials (including a couple of name stars), it was shot for a mere \$325,000 and had the deep-focus single-mindedness of a true horror exploiter. Imitators came thick and fast after that: by the time of Sam Raimi's *The Evil Dead* (1982), the genre had descended into gruesome lunacy.

The problem with renegade horror, of course, is that it quickly gets domesticated and respectable. Directors such as Hooper and Raimi went on to big budgets and big stars. Horror villains such as Michael Myers and Freddy Krueger became kids' Halloween costumes. The *Blair Witch* will undoubtedly reappear in a sequel. But nothing will match those first bone-chilling, totally unexpected nights in the woods.

—By Richard Zuglin



NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD: Out of Pittsburgh, a tale of ghoulish, unsettling terror



HALLOWEEN: Just \$325,000 was all it took to bring mad Michael Myers to the screen

age—"It was like we wrote the script during the editing," Myrick says—and used the other material for a devious docu-promo, *Curse of the Blair Witch*, that ran on the Sci-Fi Channel.

That material also got onto the web-site, designed by Sanchez. Rarely have outtakes proved so useful. They helped create a Blair world of almost Tolkienian density. "You could get into the spirit of the folklore we created without having to see the movie," Sanchez says, "or vice versa." The folklore also served as fodder for the book (No. 10 on the Amazon.com list), the comic book and, yes, the CD of songs found in the tape deck of Josh's car. Now less up, that's stretching synergy. But everything has worked so far for the good-guy directors, who sounded most excited about a wager they'd just collected on. They'd bet Artisan that if *Blair Witch* did \$10 million, they'd get a new Foosball table. It arrived in Orlando this week.

NOW THAT THEIR FIRST FEATURE is headed for \$100 million at the domestic box office, Myrick and Sanchez have just one sure thing ahead of them: the sophomore jinx. They describe their next film, a comedy called *Heart of Love*, as "Mad Mad Mad World meets Monty Python meets Airplane!" meets the stupidest movie you've ever seen. "Could it tank? Of course—like most indie or studio films. 'We know we're gonna bomb,'" says Sanchez. "We're gonna live with that bomb and nurture it and then watch it explode."

They seem to realize that the flip side of phenomenon is fluke. *Blair Witch*, a film that antagonizes as many folks as it enthralls, could be as fleeting a fad as Deely Bobbers, and with no profound meaning for the future of film—except perhaps that struggling filmmakers with a marketable attitude will for a short, happy time be overpaid by studio bosses hoping against reason for another *Blair Witch*.

"There's no good lesson to learn here," says Pierson, the indie guru whose cable show helped get the *Blair* rolling. "It's not an independent-film phenomenon. What you really have is a convergence of old and new media." And a film that blends the thrill of the unseen with the art of the sell. That's true *Witch* craft. —Reported by Georgia Harbison/New York, Jeffrey Ressler/Los Angeles with other bureaus

Talk online with Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez, the directors of *The Blair Witch Project*, Wednesday, Aug. 11 at 8 p.m. E.T. on chat.yahoo.com/time

Dreamers and Schemers

Steve Martin is wild. Eddie Murphy is crazy. Together they turn *Bowfinger* into a wacky delight

HOLLYWOOD, AS WE ALL KNOW, RUNS on high hopes and impossible dreams, which just often enough—about once in a thousand times—come true. But at a certain level, it also runs on cold pizza, unpaid phone bills and scripts by people for whom English is a second language. It's at this latter level that Bobby Bowfinger (Steve Martin), who operates Bowfinger International Pictures out of his ratty bungalow, scrounges along.

Far above him, seemingly safe behind the walls of his estate, his entourage and his raging paranoia, lives the world's greatest action star, Kit Ramsey (Eddie Murphy), his sanity tenuously secured by devotion to a group that bears a passing resemblance to Scientology.

Bowfinger, perhaps the funniest movie for grownups so far this year, recounts the attempt of the desperate former to feature the fame-addled latter in his absurd project. Basically, this involves making Kit the star of a movie without telling him he's in it. That in turn requires Bobby and his crew to stalk and provoke the star into photographable action. Since Kit is at least half convinced that he is being plagued by space aliens, these intrusions add fuel to the flame of his pathology.

Preposterous, you say. It would never work. But part of the weird genius of *Bowfinger* is that its central conceit never falls into total implausibility. At some point in the picture, you begin to see that this mad scheme is working. Or maybe it's just that you succumb to the enthusiasm with which Bobby and his associates perpetrate their con.

They are a wonderfully rum lot and include an ingenue fresh off the bus from Ohio (Heather Graham) who doesn't know much about Hollywood except that a girl is supposed to sleep her way to the top, which she's up for; a failed leading lady (Christine Baranski), boldly living out her frustrated dreams of Method acting in all the wrong places; and a production crew composed of illegal aliens who start out not knowing one end of the camera from the other and end up in learned discussions of how Fellini or Orson Welles might have shot the scene.

That's all good stuff, but the best thing about *Bowfinger* is the way the script by Steve Martin is tooled to his own and Murphy's comic strengths. At its best, Martin's screen character is a dislocating combination of yearning and take-no-prisoners opportunism. He's like a premarital child—appalling yet somehow charming. Murphy has the comic nerve to play stardom as a form of flat-out psychosis. His sweet side surfaces in the second character he plays, Kit's brother Jiff, whom Bobby hires as a part-time gofer, part-time stunt double, full-time victim of everyone's heedlessness.

The movie satirizes everything from the cell-phone culture to celebrity fawning, but its director, Frank Oz, knows that satire—especially show-biz satire—is what closes on Saturday night. So his style is casually naturalistic. He makes you believe this goofiness might really be happening. You know what? Some-where, not necessarily in the movies, not necessarily so merrily, it probably is.

—By Richard Schickel



BUDDIES: Little Hogarth and his big metallic pal

The Iron King

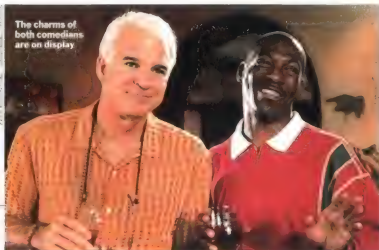
An animated tale about life, death and paranoia

ALONESOME LITTLE BOY, HYPER-active and hyperimaginative. A big, scary monster who doesn't know his own strength—especially the strength of his sweet soul. An uncomprehending world that would rather exercise its many itchy trigger fingers than try to understand that which is strange to it.

Been there? Done that? Well, sure. But Brad Bird, who directed *The Iron Giant*, and Tim McCanlies, who wrote this handsomely animated feature, have given it a special urgency by the simple expedient of setting it in exactly the right time and place. That would be 1957 in a small town in Maine. It's a moment when cold war paranoia is at its height and isolated rural communities are the targets of choice for aliens in dozens of cheap sci-fi epics.

Not that the movie is most significantly a satire of an essentially self-satirizing genre (though it is entirely hip in its cross-references). Rather, it uses the archetypes of its time to impart a certain moral and melodramatic force to its story. Its kid hero, Hogarth, is full of bounce and bravery; the car-nag-ing, train-wrecking giant is enthusiastically educable in his genially klutzy way. But the largest fun lies in the other characters: jut-jawed Kent Mansley, the funny-dumb government agent who has bought into the whole duck-and-cover thing; Dean, the beatnik junk sculptor whose cool helps thwart Kent's heat; Hogarth's mother, an old-fashioned, benignly clueless sitcom mom. Together they create a smart live-and-let-live parable, full of glancing, acute observations on all kinds of big subjects—life, death, the military-industrial complex—that you can talk about with the kids for a long time to come.

—R.S.



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Mirror Images

A slew of new shows finds Hollywood's navel ready for its close-up

By JAMES PONIEWOZIK

A MEASURE OF GREAT ART IS HOW IT sheds light on the existential burdens shared by all humankind. For instance, the deep pain you suffer when someone swipes your reserved space in the studio parking lot. That this particular human tragedy surfaces in two new series—Showtime's *Beggars and Choosers* and Fox's forthcoming *Action*—is emblematic of Hollywood's new favorite subject: itself.

"Our business interests everyone," says *Action* executive producer Joel Silver. "Everyone has two businesses—their own and show." On that assumption, a slew of new, recent and planned programs is offering behind-the-scenes takes on TV (*Beggars*, ABC's *Sports Night*, and *Kilroy*, a sitcom George Clooney is developing for HBO) and the movies (*Action*, the WB's new *Movie Stars* and AMC's mini-series *The Lot*, premiering Aug. 19 and 20). In an ingenious stunt-casting move, ABC's *It's Like, You Know...* features former *Dirty Dancing* star Jennifer Grey as—former *Dirty Dancing* star Jennifer Grey.

If this is industry self-love, though, it's tough love. While TV has turned the camera on itself from *The Dick Van Dyke Show* to *The Larry Sanders Show*, the current mirror gazing is not just more insider-oriented but harsher. Rob Petrie's foibles were along the lines of tripping over the ottoman, not buying a \$250,000 screenplay from "the wrong Jew" in a case of mistaken identity, as Jay Mohr's smarmily obnoxious producer, Peter Dragon, does in *Action*'s pilot. *Beggars*, a sharp satire set at the fictional bottom-tier network LCT, updates *Network* for broadcast's era of decline. *Action* and *Beggars* compare show business, unfavorably, with prostitution and the Mob. Meanwhile, the clever but self-important *Sports Night* treats its topic with the laugh track-eschewing gravity of *M*A*S*H*—though one rarely bleeds to death on a sportscast. The one exception to this self-flagellating trend is the



With the industry casting itself as its own favorite subject, couch potatoes are all becoming honorary insiders



ACTION: Mohr breathes fire into the vile movie producer Peter Dragon



BEGGARS AND CHOOSERS: A Network for the end of the century



MOVIE STARS: A humble family sitcom about the rich and famous

tepid family sitcom *Movie Stars*. It's *Growing Pains* with agents.

Narcissistic or not, the shows raise obvious Peoria-play questions. *Movie Stars* had a relatively strong start amid weak summer competition, while *Beggars*' ratings have not taken off, despite fairly positive reviews. *Action*, however, will prove a big test. It's got notice for bringing pay cable's profanity to broadcast, but another risky import is the deep-insider view that worked for *Larry Sanders*' select, limited audience. (Creator and executive producer Chris Thompson,

who was executive producer of *Sanders*, originally intended *Action* for HBO.) While *Action* could be the best fall comedy in an anemic field, and Mohr plays Dragon with an intriguingly baby-faced venom, looming over the show is the ghost of the short-lived *Buffalo Bill* (1983-84), which also portrayed a loathsome media figure (Dabney Coleman as a TV talk-show host). But today's fans, who can spout weekend box-office grosses like football scores, fancy themselves insiders, fascinated with and cynical about media. *Action*, says Thompson, will appeal by "confirming America's worst fears that people in show business are the crass and venal destroyers of the culture and consumed by self-interest."

Which may be just what we want to hear. In essence, these shows say about the famous what soap operas say about the rich—that they're no better than we are, probably less happy, possibly less moral. Audiences today have a love-to-hate relationship with Hollywood and the media; we've supported Beavis and Butt-head's meta-media sarcasm and David Letterman's roasting of TV bigs. It's a short step from a late-night joke about *cas* chief Les Moonves to the name dropping that has become easy punch-line fodder on even bland fare like *Movie Stars* ("Any movie where you throw Jeff Goldblum down a flight of stairs is a good movie"). These references flatter us by confirming that we're the sort of hipsters who would knowingly chuckle at them, that we're the quality audience for quality shows, unlike Hollywood's ordinary pap—an argument tailored to the upscale demographics that programmers covet. What's more, insiderism appeals to, well, insiders, which means attention from colleagues and critics. In its newfound introspection, Hollywood may be talking to itself. The question is whether the rest of us will listen.

—With reporting by

Jeanne McDowell/Los Angeles

LEGAL NOTICE

If You Purchased Toys Between January 1, 1989 And May 13, 1999

Please Read This Notice Carefully

This notice is to inform you of proposed settlements of lawsuits alleging that toy retailer Toys "R" Us, Inc. ("TRU") conspired with toy manufacturers Hasbro, Inc., Mattel, Inc. (which now owns Fisher Price, Inc. and Tyco Industries) and The Little Tikes Co. ("State and Non-State Defendants"), Sega of America Inc., Huffy Corp., Binney & Smith, Tiger Electronics, V-Tech Industries, Lego Systems, Inc., Today's Kids, and Just Toys, Inc. ("Non-State Defendants") (collectively, "Settling Defendants"), to limit the types of toys supplied to warehouse clubs such as Price Costco, Sam's Club, Pace, and B.J.'s. These lawsuits include one filed by the New York State Attorney General and joined by forty-five states (see below) on behalf of their residents, private national class actions, and state class actions filed in AL, CA, and NJ. Only the private class actions allege claims against Non-State Defendants. No trial has been held. All Defendants deny all claims of wrongdoing asserted. Due to the risk and cost of continued litigation, the parties believe the proposed settlements are fair, equitable and in the best interests of the Settlement Group.

Who is Involved

You are a member of the Settlement Group if you either:

- (i) purchased toys from Toys "R" Us during the period beginning January 1, 1989 through May 13, 1999, or
- (ii) are a resident of AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NY, NM, NC, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WV, WI, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico and purchased toys from a toy retailer during the period January 1, 1989 through May 13, 1999.

Terms of Settlements

Settling Defendants have agreed to pay a combination of cash and toys in the following amounts: TRU - \$40,500,000; Mattel - \$8,222,900; Hasbro - \$5,950,000; Little Tikes - \$1,316,250; Non-State Defendants (jointly) - \$864,285. Today's Kids has agreed to participate in a binding arbitration to determine what they will pay. All Settling Defendants have agreed to injunctive provisions prohibiting each from violating the antitrust laws. They have also agreed, for settlement purposes only, to the certification of a nationwide class of toy purchasers.

Toys: The Marnes' Toys for Tots Foundation did and will distribute toys to children in the U.S. in the 1999 - 2001 holiday seasons. Cash: The cash paid by State Defendants, after payment of attorneys' fees, litigation and settlement administration costs, shall be allocated among the States based on each's percentage share of the total U.S. population. Each state's share will be distributed to government, non-profit, and/or charitable entities to provide children with toys, books, or educational materials. Funds remaining from the Non-State Defendant settlements, after the payment of fees and costs, will be distributed in the same manner.

Attorneys' Fees & Costs

The Attorneys General will seek a monetary and costs award of not more than \$2,276,000, which is 4% of the total value of settlements with the State Defendants. Class counsel will apply to the Court for fees and costs of not more than \$3,940,000, or 7% of the total value of the settlements with all Settling Defendants.

Your Rights

These proposed settlements will resolve and release claims alleged in these actions against all Settling Defendants. If you are a member of the Settlement Group, your rights against Settling Defendants are affected.

- If you fit the Settlement Group description, you may remain a member of the Group or opt out. As a member, you need do nothing. But, you will be bound by all orders and judgments of the Court and your claims against Settling Defendants for the conduct alleged in these actions will be resolved and released. As a member, you may object to the proposed settlements or the fee and cost applications by getting a copy of the more detailed notice (see below) and sending in your written objections according to its directions, postmarked by September 27, 1999.

- If you do not wish to remain a member, you may opt out by mailing a written opt out request to the persons below, postmarked by September 27, 1999. If you intend to exclude yourself from fewer than all of the settlements, please indicate which settlements you want to be excluded from.

Clerk of the Court
U.S. District Court
225 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, NY 11201

TRU Antitrust
Litigation Administrator
P.O. Box 1562
Faribault, MN 55021-1562

- As a member, you may also appear at the settlement hearing. To do so, you or your attorney must file a notice of intention to appear with the Clerk of the Court, at the address above, by September 27, 1999 and must mail it to the persons identified in the more detailed notice, postmarked by September 27, 1999.

The Court will hold a final approval hearing on the proposed settlements and the fee and cost applications on October 15, 1999, at 10:00 a.m., in the Courtroom of the Honorable Nina Gershon, at the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, 225 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, NY 11201. This hearing may be continued without further notice.

For More Information

and a Copy of a More Detailed Notice Write:
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Or visit the website at
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Christina's World

A new teen star has a voice that goes way beyond mere kid stuff

SOMETIMES THE GODS OF POP MUSIC like to play a little joke. Browsing the aisles of a Times Square record store the other day, Christina Aguilera got quite a surprise. Unrecognized amid the hurly-burly of fellow shoppers stood one of her heroes, Fred Durst, leader of the red-hot rock-hop band Limp Bizkit. Aguilera zeroed in, angling for an autograph, but it was not to be: her quarry slipped into the crowd and scurried away.

What Durst didn't know is that the petite blond with the big eyes was not just another fan but one of the most strikingly gifted singers to come along since Mariah Carey. Aguilera, 18, is poised to become pop's next female superstar. Her debut single, *Genie in a Bottle*, took only a few weeks to rise to No. 1 and is generating the kind of genuine enthusiasm on radio and MTV that doesn't come around much anymore. The song reveals a crystalline voice full of wonderful shadings and with a soulful ring that sets her apart in the overhyped teen market. If bookmakers take odds on who will be a bigger star after Aguilera's self-titled debut album comes out Aug. 24, the smart money won't be on Durst.

Aguilera got where she is using some familiar stepping stones. At nine she appeared on *Star Search*, and at 12 she be-

Stealer games.

The young singer also broadened her palette by studying the blues recordings of Etta James and B.B. King. Now Aguilera blends the whoops, swoops and clean lines of a pure voice like Whitney Houston's with the darker, more earthy tones of the blues, giving her singing a sturdy backbone. RCA Records heard her demo tape, brought her in to sing a cappella and signed her up. The upcoming CD shows off her range. *Come On Over* is a gospel-tinged R.-and-B. rouser that gives her a chance to shout; *So Emotional* is a Brandy-style midtempo ballad that she patiently builds to an emotional climax.

Aguilera's aspirations reach beyond dreams of mere pop-chart success. "If music becomes too pop, I lose interest," she says. "The studio can be confining. I need to be challenged." RCA executive Ron Fair says the label will "not shackle" Aguilera and envisions TV and even Broadway for her too. "She's our Streisand," says Fair. This week she'll perform with solo piano at Lilith Fair, a reflection of the label's confidence in her as a true singer and not just a studio act. From now on, Aguilera is more likely to be signing autographs than asking for them. And if Fred Durst happens by, he'll just have to go to the end of the line.

—By David E. Thigpen

MUSIC

Queen Mary

The hip-hop diva takes a look at love, and herself

THERE'S A LONG, STRONG HISTORY IN R. and B. of female singers taking lovers to task. Pop music, of course, is full of songs about romance gone wrong, but when R.-and-B. divas dress men down, they're often a bit more real. Blues great Bessie Smith, in *Hard Time Blues*, sang about leaving a man with "dirty ways"; today Erykah Badu castigates her cell phone-hogging lover on her song *Tyrone*; TLC ridicules deadbeat men on *No Scrubs*, and the vocal group Destiny's Child cries out for men who can pay their girlfriends' *Bills, Bills, Bills*. Hip-hop soul singer Mary J. Blige, on her enjoyable new CD, *Mary* (MCA), contin-



SOUL SISTER NO. 2: Blige holds her own in a duet with Aretha Franklin on the new CD

ues the tradition. Blige sees through men and their cheating ways; she reads them, thumbing through them like magazines in a dentist's office, until their true feelings flutter out like subscription cards.

But Blige is also hard on herself. On *Deep Inside*, which cleverly incorporates part of Elton John's *Bennie and the Jets*, she takes a look at her own emotional baggage. On *Not Lookin'*, Blige derides "player sh..." but is confident enough to bring in male singer (and ex-boyfriend) K-Ci Hailey for a sort of vocal debate. *Mary* is somewhat inconsistent in song quality, but Blige's soul-sung vocals save the weaker material. There are also several high points: on *Don't Waste Your Time*, Aretha Franklin and Blige stage a soulful summit meeting on trifling men, and on *All That I Can Say*, Lauryn Hill, the song's producer and writer, serves up a gorgeous melody. Blige and her female collaborators want to reach out to men, but, if need be, these sisters can do it for themselves.

—By Christopher John Farley

SHORT TAKES

MUSIC

BOB DYLAN AND PAUL SIMON IN CONCERT Bob Dylan took the stage first in his joint outing with Paul Simon at Jones Beach Theater in New York on July 31, and he put on a show that was hard to follow. Dylan's voice, as it has been for some years, was like a ragged flag blowin' in the wind, but his spirit was strong, and his guitar playing commanding. Simon accompanied him for



a few duets, including a bulked-up *The Sound of Silence*. But by the time Simon began his solo set, it was all anticlimax. He put on a fair performance, but he was in the presence of an eclipsing talent. Now Simon must know how Art Garfunkel felt all those years. —By Christopher John Farley

CINEMA

THE SIXTH SENSE Directed by M. Night Shyamalan Sullen Cole Sear (Haley Joel



Osment) only seems geeky. He's literally haunted, a topic he does not discuss. Bruce Willis plays Malcolm Crowe, the infinitely committed psychiatrist who pries the secret out of the boy and makes him understand that the ghosts are lonely too. One has to wonder if audiences eager for scarier visions of the supernatural will respond to this benign tale. But it unfolds with a patient intelligence. *The Sixth Sense* might not scare you out of your wits, but it could reward them. —By Richard Schickel

THEATER

A GOOD SWEET KICK By John Forster With Broadway musicals intent on offering messages instead of laughs, it's no wonder that comedy-starved audiences have been flocking to off-Broadway revues. Spotlighting



mankind's tics and follies, composer-lyricist John Forster has created the freshest and funniest of them. Whether targeting the timely (Thomas Jefferson's DNA) or the timeless (romantic mismatches), Forster delivers hilariously. The cast of five is just about perfect. —By William Tynan

TELEVISION

MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000 Sci-Fi Channel, Aug. 14 In the not too distant future—this Saturday—Mike Nelson and his robots will finally call

it quits, after 10 seasons of sublime postmodern TV. The rest of us must now make fun of cheesy movies on our own. (Noooo!) The closing film is *Danger: Diabolik*, a Mario Bava 007 rip-off with swarthy Michel Piccoli ("He's basically an eyebrow-delivery system"). Happily, the best brains in comedy go out in style—and will be back for a last, "lost" episode Sept. 12. Thanks, guys. You were great. —By Richard Corliss



SWEETWATER: A TRUE ROCK STORY

VH1, Aug. 15 Some things are worse than burning out or fading away, such as this risible rock biopic. VH1's first original movie turns the story of the first band to play Woodstock into a schlock-adelic mystery tour of ham-fisted period reminders: characters actually say, "You messin' with her trip?" Felicity's Amy Jo Johnson works valiantly with this fame-boozed-down fall story, but some things are just better left to *Where Are They Now?* —By James Poniewozik



Q+A Michelle Williams

Michelle Williams co-stars in *Dick*, the new film comedy about Watergate, and is also a regular on TV's *Dawson's Creek*.

Q. When they cast Harry Shearer as G. Gordon Liddy in *Dick*, did you think to yourself, "Who's G. Gordon Liddy?"

A. No. I grew up in a very political household. My father is a big conspiracy theorist. He's really wacked.

Q. That's right—you grew up in Montana. How many guns does your dad have?

A. I will not answer that question.

Q. Wow. How psyched is your dad on *Y2K*?

A. I haven't talked to him about it. I remember his being ecstatic when the government shut down [during the 1995 budget standoff]. He said, "This is the beginning of the end. Just wait, Michelle."

Q. So who would you rather sleep with: Haldeman or Liddy?

A. When I think of Liddy, all that comes up in my head is Harry Shearer. I'm going to have to go with Haldeman.

Q. Does anyone over 18 recognize you?

A. Yes.

Q. Not including prison inmates?

A. Well, yes. Older men really respond well to the nymphomaniac 16-year-old.

Q. You refused to go to the reshoot for the cover of *Maxim* magazine because they tried to make you look too slutty. Had you never seen *Maxim*?

A. I had seen one, but I had just seen the cover. I never really looked inside.

Q. They'll bring in breast models.

A. Really? I have great breasts.

Q. It's comments like "I have great breasts" that get you Lolita-ized.

A. I don't mean, like, "I have great breasts—come touch them—feel them." I feel very uncomfortable about my body, so I was trying to brush that off with sarcasm.

Q. But the quote I'll use is, "I have great breasts. Come touch them. Feel them."

A. See, I need to learn how to handle this much better. But you wouldn't do that.

Q. Me? I'm harmless. Ask anybody.

—By Joel Stein



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Joshua Quittner

Sound Machines

Yamaha's new receiver brings high-quality audio to your personal computer. But is it worth it?

DURING A RECENT OFFICE MOVE, SOMEONE HEISTED a pair of trusty old computer speakers from one of my machines. A lot of people would obsess about the crime and curse the cruel God who could create such larcenous, broken souls. Not me. I saw it as an opportunity to get a better stereo system for my computer.

As long as I was upgrading anyway, I wanted something that would match the luscious digital quality of the DVD player in my PC, which I

was using to "test" the latest DVD-movie releases. I reasoned I could get another set of "multimedia speakers"—with built-in amplifiers, these are made just for a computer—or I could go wild and try Yamaha's new "personal receiver" (RP-U100), a \$499 high-end amplifier and tuner that plugs into your PC. The beauty of being me is that I got to go wild.

The Yamaha, which starts shipping at the end of August, is the first stereo receiver made specifically for the PC. (A Mac version is expected later.) Why would you want one? Instead of being limited by traditional computer speakers, you can now use virtually any speakers, including the ones on your home stereo. The device, somewhat smaller than a VCR, pumps out 30 watts per channel, has "virtual" Dolby Digital (which simulates five-speaker "surround sound") and has a digital signal processor that allows one-button access to a variety of preset audio mixes. CD players have been offering that last feature for a while—you can simulate the echoey acoustic footprint of a church, for instance, or a jazz club, a movie theater or a concert hall. Another setting is designed for gamers, making explosions boomer and ray guns zapier. Technophiles will also like the dynamic-range adjustment, which makes loud sounds softer and soft sounds louder—a handy feature if you want to watch a movie without annoying your neighbors. Finally, the unit has an AM-FM tuner.



PERSONAL RECEIVER brings hi-fi to PCs

ceiver into your PC; the PC Home Theater is just supposed to simplify the process through its onscreen "remote control" and by using that handy usb port. Yet I found the system klugey. For instance, I have a TV tuner in my PC, but since the Yamaha device bypasses the sound card the tuner resides on, the TV system doesn't work. A spokesman said I could fix the problem with the right adapters—but I had to buy them separately. Finally, the device supports only one set of speakers, which means you can forget quadraphonic. I ended up not using the Yamaha and buying a pair of Cambridge Soundworks PC Works speakers, tiny desktop units with a modest subwoofer that sits on the floor. The cost? \$50. At a price like that, it's almost theftproof.

For more on using your PC as a stereo, see our website at timedigital.com. You can always e-mail Quittner at jquitt@well.com.

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN Now that bathing-suit season is almost over, you can ease up on the stomach crunches and focus on a decidedly more important part of your anatomy, your brain. Mind Gym, from Simon & Schuster Interactive (\$30), aims to boost your mental agility with a series of fun, silly games. Begin by answering a few odd questions: Could a trout be mayor? Would you read a book called, *10 Steps to Health, Wealth and Happiness*? If you answered no to both, you may not be very open to new ideas, scolds the CD-ROM's sarcastic, British-accented narrator. To fix that, he takes you through a series of playful exercises to make you more experimental, proactive, empowered... You get the idea. In one exercise, you're asked how a cucumber might bring world peace. Ridiculous? Well, "sometimes you have to contemplate the crazy to come up with a really buzzy idea," says the narrator. Even if you decide that Mind Gym is just a game, it's an engaging little game—and that's the idea.



SHARP AND STYLISH For years, digital camera owners have lived like second-class citizens, settling for grainy pics while they waited for prices to fall on high-res models. The wait paid off this spring, when Ricoh, Sony and others introduced the first sub-\$1,000, 2-megapixel cameras with near film quality. Now Yashica is improving on the standard with its Samurai 2100DG, which boasts the first 4X optical zoom for sharper pics, and a one-hand design to help eliminate blurring caused by accidental shaking of the camera. Due out Aug. 20, the Samurai weighs in at a still hefty 14 oz. and \$900. —By Anita Hamilton





Christine Gorman

Is SAME for Real?

Europeans take this natural remedy for arthritis and depression. They may be on to something

ALTHOUGH I TAKE 250 MG OF VITAMIN C EACH DAY, I'm pretty much a skeptic when it comes to dietary supplements. Most of the ones I've seen are basically patent medicines whose proponents, seizing on a few isolated facts about the body, tout a treatment plan that has more to do with magic than medicine. But occasionally a supplement like SAME (pronounced sam-me) comes along that piques even my interest. It's supposed to combat depression, ease aching joints and possibly revitalize the liver. I'm not convinced these claims are true, but I think they're worth a closer look.

First, a note of caution. If you're suicidal or severely depressed, get professional help. Don't try treating yourself with SAME or any other compound on your own.

If supplements were movies, SAME would be the sleeper hit of the summer. Introduced in the U.S. in March, it is now the fourth most popular individual supplement in drugstore chains and general retail outlets. General Nutrition Centers reports that SAME is surpassing even St. John's wort in sales. Two breathless guidebooks have already been published, and three more are coming in the fall.

Biochemists have known about SAME for years, although they usually call it SAM, which is short for S-adenosylmethionine, a compound made by every cell in the body. (I don't know why it was renamed. Maybe the dietary-supplements folks think Sammy sounds sexier than Sam.) Turns out that SAM or SAME plays a pivotal role in hundreds of biochemical reactions in the body. It's a methyl donor, meaning that it can attach a molecule made of one carbon atom and three hydrogen atoms to various proteins, lipids and even snippets of DNA. Such methylation reactions are important in the production of many critical substances, including neurotransmitters in the brain and enzymes that help repair joints and the liver.

Much of the evidence for SAME's effectiveness comes from Europe. Researchers in Italy documented its apparent antidepressant qualities in several small studies



WALLET ALERT: Even at \$1 a pill, SAME may be worth the price

in the 1970s. (A couple of more recent U.S. studies found similar results.) Doctors in Germany think it may reverse some of the damage caused by osteoarthritis, the wear-and-tear form of arthritis.

The results, though not definitive, are intriguing enough so that several U.S. psychiatrists have started offering SAME, both in addition to more conventional treatments and by itself.

Rheumatologists have been more wary. "It does seem to offer pain relief," says Dr. William Arnold, who is chief medical editor of a book on alternative medicines that the Arthritis Foundation is publishing in October. "But the arthritis experiments were very uncontrolled." He's more impressed by another natural compound, glucosamine, which is the subject of a study being funded by the National Institutes of Health.

Even if SAME is not the wonder cure its proponents claim, it so far appears to be safe. Some minor side effects, such as hot, itchy ears, have been reported. As with any antidepressant, a few people who take it develop mania, an uncontrolled frenzy of emotion and activity. Who knows what else may turn up if millions of people start using it? Maybe that's one reason SAME is still a prescription drug in Europe. So, if you do decide to try it, it's not a bad idea to let your doctor know so that he or she can watch for anything unusual.

For more information about SAME, visit us on the Web at time.com/personal. You can send Christine e-mail at gorman@time.com

GOOD NEWS

GENES OF THE HEART

Even with advanced surgical techniques and medicines, heart disease kills more Americans than any other condition. The problem in most cases is the death of heart muscle, which becomes starved for oxygen when fatty deposits clog up blood byways. Researchers have now shown, however, that directly injecting the

heart with a gene that promotes blood-vessel growth is safe and well tolerated. And most of the small number of patients in this early study reported less chest pain.

A RITALIN PLUS Parents of children with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder have a new reason to get their kids treated. Among boys with ADHD, those taking Ritalin, the medication most commonly prescribed for this condition, are less likely to abuse alcohol or other substances when they become adults.

BAD NEWS

HEAR THIS Moms-to-be know that smoking can harm a baby even before it's born by contributing to a host of health and developmental problems from low birth weight to learning difficulties to asthma. You can add ear infections to the list. A pregnant woman who smokes 20 cigarettes a day triples the risk that her child will develop an ear infection serious enough to require drainage (a common procedure performed under general anesthesia). Lighting up only one to nine times daily boosts the risk of infection 60%.

BULLY WATCH It's not surprising that victims of playground bullies may develop psychological and behavioral problems such as bed wetting, low self-esteem and depression. But a European study shows that bullies themselves have a higher-than-average incidence of depression and thoughts of suicide. —By Alice Park

Sources—Good News: *Cardiology* (8/3/99); *Pediatrics* (8/2/99); *Bad News: Pediatrics* (8/2/99); *British Medical Journal* (5/7/99)





Daniel Kadlec

Back in the Game

Big Mac and Sammy have made baseball memorabilia hot again. Here's how to play it smart

BASEBALL MEMORABILIA IS HAVING AN MVP YEAR. Last week three new treasures were made: Mark McGwire's career homer No. 500, and Tony

Gwynn's and Wade Boggs' career hits No. 3,000. Grab one of those balls, and it will be the biggest hit of your life too. The McGwire ball is a certain smash. Months before Big Mac launched his historic bomb, memorabilia dealer Mike Barnes of Festus, Mo., offered \$100,000 as an immediate cash advance to the fan who recovered it. Barnes plans to auction the ball.

The fan will get the proceeds, which Barnes estimates at \$500,000; he'll keep a 10% fee.

This isn't kid stuff. McGwire's 70th homer ball last season fetched \$3 million. The famous Barry Halper collection, which includes Ty Cobb's dentures and a lock of Babe Ruth's hair, will rake in an estimated \$45 million at auction next month. Baseball memorabilia has never been more dear, owing to a tidal wave of enthusiasm for the sport that stems in large part from last year's Sammy and Mark show—airing again this year.

If you've got anything baseball related tucked away in the attic and want to get rid of it, now is a good time to clean house. The memorabilia market runs hot and cold. In the early '90s, only truly special mementos brought big money. In today's bull market, though, collectors recently had a chance to bid via online auctioneer eBay for a McGwire jockstrap with a listed price of \$1,500. Game-used bats, balls and uniforms tend to be the hottest items. Baseball cards are back. Signed balls and photos are big.

Tempted by memorabilia madness, I dusted off my own modest collection a few weeks ago. I'm a lifetime Cardinals fan, so I lugged my stuff to dealer Barnes, in the heart of Redbird country. Lesson No. 1: most baseball junk is exactly that. My scorecard from the day Lou Brock hit No. 3,000 and my 1964, 1967 and 1982 World Series commemorative glassware apparently have little value. Lesson No. 2: mint condition means per-



McGwire's 1985 Topps rookie card shows the value in condition
GEM MINT 10\$2,500
MINT 9\$375
NEAR MINT 8\$150

fection, and nothing you have qualifies. My Topps '85 McGwire rookie card had been touched by human hands only two or three times before I had it professionally graded and sealed. It scored an 8, not a perfect 10. That makes the card worth about \$150, not \$2,500. I can only imagine what little value cards once clothespinned between my bicycle spokes have.

I had better luck with other items, though, and found that should I so choose, cashing in without getting ripped off is easier than you might expect. Do not take collectibles to the neighborhood memorabilia dealer, who will give you half of retail value. For items worth a few hundred to a few thousand dollars, online auction sites like eBay or Amazon.com are a great place to sell. For more valuable items, sports auctioneers, such as Leland's, Mastro and Superior Sports, are worth a try.

Regardless of how you sell, Step 1 is to have autographs, uniforms, bats and balls authenticated and cards professionally graded and sealed. At \$5 to \$10 a card, it's not cheap. But it's the only way to know what your things are worth on the market. For help in doing that, see Professional Sports Authenticator's website (psacard.com) or Sportscard Guaranty's website (sgccard.com). Now if only they'd help me get back the ball signed by Bob Gibson that's sitting on my son's desk. ■

More on collectibles at time.com. Dan is featured on CNNn Tuesdays at 12:45 p.m. E.T. and BNN radio Mondays at 5:40 p.m. E.T.

GOOD-GUY INVESTING Concerned that your best mutual fund holds a company that deals with repressive governments or pollutes? Turn to greenmoney.com or socialfunds.com, where you can find funds that represent environmentally and other conscience-friendly companies. Even better, you can find market beaters among an array of funds that screen out the "bad guys" and pick from the best of the rest.

Good Conscience, Good Returns
 3 year yield:

IPS Millennium	35.14
Citizens Index Fund	
	34.64
Domini Social Equity Fund	
	31.14

Source: www.socialfunds.com

O.K. FOR Y2K Hope you haven't shelled out for that special Year 2000 bedroom safe yet. Last week federal regulators reported that 99% of the nation's federally insured banks, thrifts and credit unions have passed their Y2K-bug tests. Just to be sure, the House approved a measure that would help banks get more money from the Fed to

circulate should too many worrywarts pull out their cash before year's end.

FRIENDLY SKIES In a move that confirms the airlines' growing willingness to sell reduced-fare tickets through Web intermediaries, Continental Airlines just became the latest major airline to begin hawking unused seats on the priceline.com ticket site. Expect to find more deals at one of the dozens of cheap ticket sites—like travelocity.com, lowestfare.com and cheaptickets.com—as more airlines opt to make a modest profit by selling empty off-peak seats to budget vacationers.

—By Greg Kirschling





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Michael Lemonick

Fast-Track Toddlers

Two new books challenge the notion that exposure to Mozart and Matisse will make your baby smarter

CONSIDERING THAT THERE'S ESSENTIALLY NO SCIENCE TO support it, the Mozart effect has had a pretty good run. Parents all over the U.S. have been playing the Austrian

composer's music to their infants and toddlers on the theory that it stimulates brain development. Even a few state governments have got into the act: Georgia and Tennessee are giving classical-music CDs to new mothers, and Florida has mandated that state-run day-care facilities play such music each day.

In fact, though, the original research behind this attractive notion said nothing about infants or even about intelligence, and it certainly made no claims about brain development. All it showed was that a group of college students did better on a battery of specialized tests shortly after listening to Mozart—and to make matters worse, no scientist has been able to duplicate those results, despite numerous attempts.

As a book to be published next month makes clear, neurologists know very little about how the brain develops in the first few years of life. In *The Myth of the First Three Years*, John Bruer, president of the McDonnell Foundation, based in St. Louis, Mo., argues that much of the advice parents

are getting about how to make their very young kids smarter and more talented is based on gross exaggerations of brain science. So, he says, is the notion, suggested by some advocacy groups, that brain development all but shuts down after age three. Too much focus on this so-called critical period, he claims, in the form of programs like Head Start, may thus be misguided.

Surprisingly, most of his targets agree with Bruer—to a point. "It's quite true," says Dr. Charles Nelson, a neuroscientist at

the University of Minnesota, "that there aren't any studies looking at brain development in young children." And Matthew Melmed, executive director of Zero to Three, an educational organization whose advice-laden website is a target of Bruer's ire, acknowledges that "there have been some who have stretched the science."

But the experts point out that Bruer too has stretched his arguments far beyond what makes sense. "We may not have neuroscience research to back up a lot of what we believe about child development," says Dr. Patricia Kuhl, an expert on speech and hearing at the University of Washington. "But we do have a wealth of data over the past 40 years from developmental and cognitive psychology that tell us those early years are hugely important."

In most cases, the data address what happens when children are deprived of stimulation, not what happens when they get extra helpings. If kids aren't routinely exposed to language during the first year of life, for example—

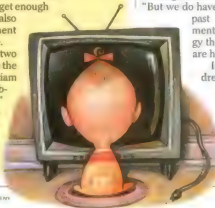


IN BRIEF

Pediatricians Turn into TV Critics

NEXT TIME YOU BRING YOUR YOUNGSTER IN FOR A CHECKUP, DON'T BE SURPRISED if the doctor asks about her tastes in entertainment. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggested last week that doctors work with parents to evaluate how much TV kids watch and what they see, what video and computer games they play, where they surf on the Internet, whether they view R-rated videos, what music they like and what books they read. Doctors are worried that kids who spend too much time in front of the tube don't get enough exercise and can become overweight. The academy is also concerned that the messages kids get from entertainment media can make them more violent and sexually active.

The academy recommends that children under age two not watch any TV. "Children need activities to stimulate the brain during the first two years of life," says Dr. Miriam Bar-on, who chairs the academy's committee on public education. "They need feedback and socialization." Older children, she says, should watch TV in a common area. Their bedrooms should be "electronic media-free" zones where they can have a quiet place to read, study, play or just relax.



ILLUSTRATIONS FOR TIME BY GLYNIS BREWSTER



The real problem with parents' playing Mozart or making the baby listen to foreign-language tapes or forcing him to look at works of great art is that this satisfies the parents' agenda, not necessarily the child's. "Babies are like little scientists," says Kuhl, who, along with two co-authors, presents her ideas in a book also coming out next month, *The Scientist in the Crib*. "They take in data, make hypotheses about the outside world and test them." This sort of learning goes on throughout life, but Kuhl argues convincingly that the process is most intense and wide ranging in the first few years.

Trying to push a child in a specific direction or to exercise specific mental muscles, in short, is probably relatively harmless, but it's also almost certainly a waste of time. Giving the toddler plenty of opportunity to explore the world and interact

with people in a positive way, on the other hand, is essential to successful early parenting.

The problem most experts have with Bruer is that by taking a reasonable point and pushing it too far, he does just what he accuses others of doing. A quick visit to one of his favorite targets, the "I Am Your Child" website, makes that clear. The basic guidelines for zero- to three-year-olds outlined on the site's introductory page read as follows: "Be warm, loving and responsive. Respond to the child's cues and clues. Talk, read and sing to your child. Establish routines and rituals. Encourage safe exploration and play. Make TV watching selective. Use discipline as an opportunity to teach. Recognize that each child is unique. Choose quality child care and stay involved. Take care of yourself."

Maybe those suggestions aren't based on rigorous neuroscientific research, and maybe they're equally applicable to kids of four or five. But they're pretty good advice nonetheless.

For more about parenting young children, see our website at time.com/personal. Send e-mail to Mike at timfamily2@aol.com

DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY NO? The anti-drug program DARE is taught in 75% of U.S. school districts, yet a new study from the University of Kentucky indicates that it has no long-term effect on kids' use of illegal drugs. In interviews with those who completed DARE in 1988, 46% admitted to smoking marijuana and 24% to taking other drugs within the past year. Researchers say programs would be more effective if they focused on kids most at risk.



HEY, SEXY Contrary to common perceptions, most older Americans are sexually active and willing to experiment. *Modern Maturity* magazine reports that 67% of men and 57% of women age 45 or older say a satisfying sexual relationship is important to them, and more than a quarter of Americans 75 or older have sex at least once a week. Also, the number of people who view their partners as physically



attractive increases with age. Fifty-six percent of those 45 to 74 say they do, rising to 61% of those 75 or older.

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT Despite high-profile school shootings in places like Littleton, Colo., the good news is that overall teen violence, including homicide, is on the decline. A

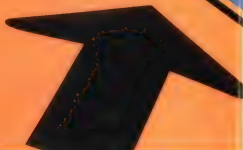
report last week in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* shows that from 1991 to '97, the number of 9th-to-12th-graders who packed a weapon fell from 26% to 18%; those involved in a fight and needing treatment by a doctor or nurse dipped from 4.4% to 3.5%. —By Daniel S. Levy

Percentage of students who ...



SAP

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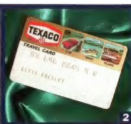


Take a Bow

Hollywood is littered with actor-directors and actor-activists, but the ranks of actor-Olympians are woefully humble. The field did swell after **GEENA DAVIS** finished 29th among the 300 women at the National Archery championships in July. As one of the top 32 finishers, the professionally oddball Oscar winner qualified to compete at the Olympic trials semifinals to be held later this month. If she makes the top eight, she'll move on to the finals. Davis took up the sport only about two years ago, after watching the 1996 Games on TV, but she proved a quick study with the quiver. Now she's practicing six days a week, five hours a day. Her chances of making the team are slim, but if she does, we know she can be counted on to deliver an emotional acceptance speech and wear something fabulous.

PEOPLE

By MICHELE ORECKLIN



THE KING'S RANSOM GOES ON THE BLOCK

How better to honor the onset of **ELVIS Week** (Aug. 8-16) than to weigh how much you're willing to spend on Presley memorabilia? Guernsey's auction house and Elvis Presley Enterprises are putting 1,000 lots taken from the Graceland vaults up for grabs in October at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas to raise money for Presley Place, a transitional-housing development in Memphis, Tenn. Among the items: a portrait by the only artist for whom Elvis ever sat (1); a Texaco credit card (2); a 1971 jumpsuit (3); sheet music for *All Shook Up* (with original title *I'm All Shook Up*) (4); and the aptly named "Peacock Belt" (5). While you should start saving money, there's no need to diet; items from the fat and the skinny years are available.

YOU'VE GOT A (FAMOUS) FRIEND

Both the televised and the titled took time to commit selfless acts of bravery last week. A rundown on the heroics:

JOSHUA JACKSON

RESPONSE TO DISTRESS: Dawson's Creek star dove into the North Carolina surf after spotting two girls in danger of drowning.

RISK TO SELF: Significant. Once he reached the girls, waves swept them all over a jetty, and the Coast Guard had to be called in.

RISK TO WARDROBE: Shrinking cottons; bleeding colors.

P.R. BOOST: Likely to gain wall space in teenage girls' bedrooms.

PRINCES WILLIAM AND HARRY

RESPONSE TO DISTRESS: The brothers stopped their car on a London street after spotting a driver whose battery had failed.

RISK TO SELF: Moderate. Could have hurt their backs pushing the stalled BMW, but had bodyguards in an accompanying car.

RISK TO WARDROBE: Oil stains; unsightly wrinkling.

P.R. BOOST: Prove Windsors are good royals and good Samaritans.



THINGS WE DON'T NEED TO SEE

CARNIE WILSON

(Brian's daughter) fighting obesity by having gastric-bypass surgery live on the Internet in August



ARABELLA CHURCHILL

(Winston's granddaughter) fighting age by getting a full face-lift live on the Internet in November



Michael Kinsley

That's Really Big of Him

A closer look at the cornerstone of George W.'s compassionate conservatism

ALTHOUGH GEORGE W. BUSH IS RIDING HIGH, HIS STATED philosophy of "compassionate conservatism" is not so popular. Liberals think it's a contradiction in terms. The press thinks it's meaningless spin. Many conservatives think it's way too defensive.

In fact, these criticisms are unfair. Compassionate conservatism is emerging as a doctrine with a specific meaning, which deserves to be treated seriously. The meaning can be glimpsed in Bush's promise to spend \$8 billion financing social programs of "faith-based" and other private institutions. And it is reflected in the tax bill emerging from the Republican-controlled Congress.

In a nutshell, the meaning is this: the government should achieve desirable goals by creating incentives for private individuals and organizations, primarily in the form of tax cuts. Much of Bush's \$8 billion would be used to expand the charitable deduction, provide "new incentives" for corporate giving and so on. The House tax bill is full of deductions and credits for this or that form of officially approved behavior, primarily saving and investment.

This is a serious philosophy of government. One thing it is not, though, is small government. Politically, compassionate conservatives try to have it both ways: they're reducing the burden of government (unlike liberals), and they're addressing society's problems (unlike traditional conservatives). It's certainly wonderful to be told, as a voter, that you can show your concern about the nation's have-nots, about the nation's moral values and so on by accepting a tax cut. But government-by-tax-credit is still government. It's "letting people keep more of their own hard-earned money," as the pols like to say, but only if they do what the government wants.

A tax incentive appears on the books as a reduction in the size of government. But this is misleading. To qualify for a dollar tax credit, you must use many dollars in some way the government dictates. So every new tax credit actually increases the fraction of the economy directed by the government.

In theory, tax incentives have two advantages over traditional government programs: (a) they're cheaper, because each dollar of lost tax revenue produces multiple dollars of the desired activity; and (b) they're smarter, because they tap into the creativity of the private sector. Both premises, though, are open to question.

One problem on the cost side is that some of the activity you're trying to encourage would occur anyway. In these cases the subsidies are wasted. This is egregiously true of tax incentives to promote savings, such as IRAs. People would save money even if there were no tax advantage. They may save more because of the tax incentive, but they get the break from dollar one.

Why is the tax code so hideously complex? It's not because the IRS is run by fiends. Every twist and turn is there because someone wanted to use taxes to influence other people's behavior. Tax simplification is a popular rallying cry, but compassionate conservatives seem intent on making the tax code even more ornate.

The notion that any private organization is superior to any government agency is more appealing in theory than in practice. The Aug. 2 issue of *TIME* quoted a conservative who is already alarmed that compassionate conservatism might benefit left-wing groups. He doesn't wish to be that compassionate! The problem with Bush's grants and tax credits is like the problem with school vouchers: giving people a choice means forcing other people to contribute tax dollars to institutions they may find offensive. Government compassion subsidies, says Bush's poop sheet, "should be available ... to all organizations," which "should not be forced to compromise their core values" in order to chow down. Oh, really? Buddhists, sure, but what about nudists?

Watching your tax money being spent on something you disapprove of is a central experience of democracy. But conventional government spending is an expression, however indirectly, of the popular will. That's both a consolation for those who object and a constraint on who gets the money. Under compassionate conservative-style Big Government, there is no consolation and no constraint. In theory, that is. In practice, constraint is inevitable. There will be bureaucratic rules and regs over who qualifies as a compassion conduit—along with ugly political battles, lawsuits and all the irritating side dishes of Big Government. Then someone will have a brain-storm: Why not let the voters decide what the government should do, and then have the government do that and no more? You might call it limited government. That person used to be called a conservative. ■





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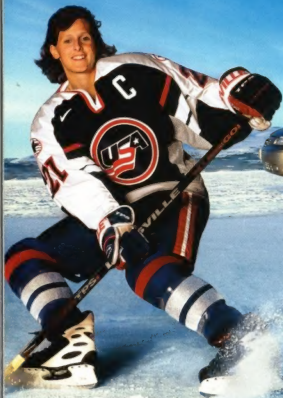
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